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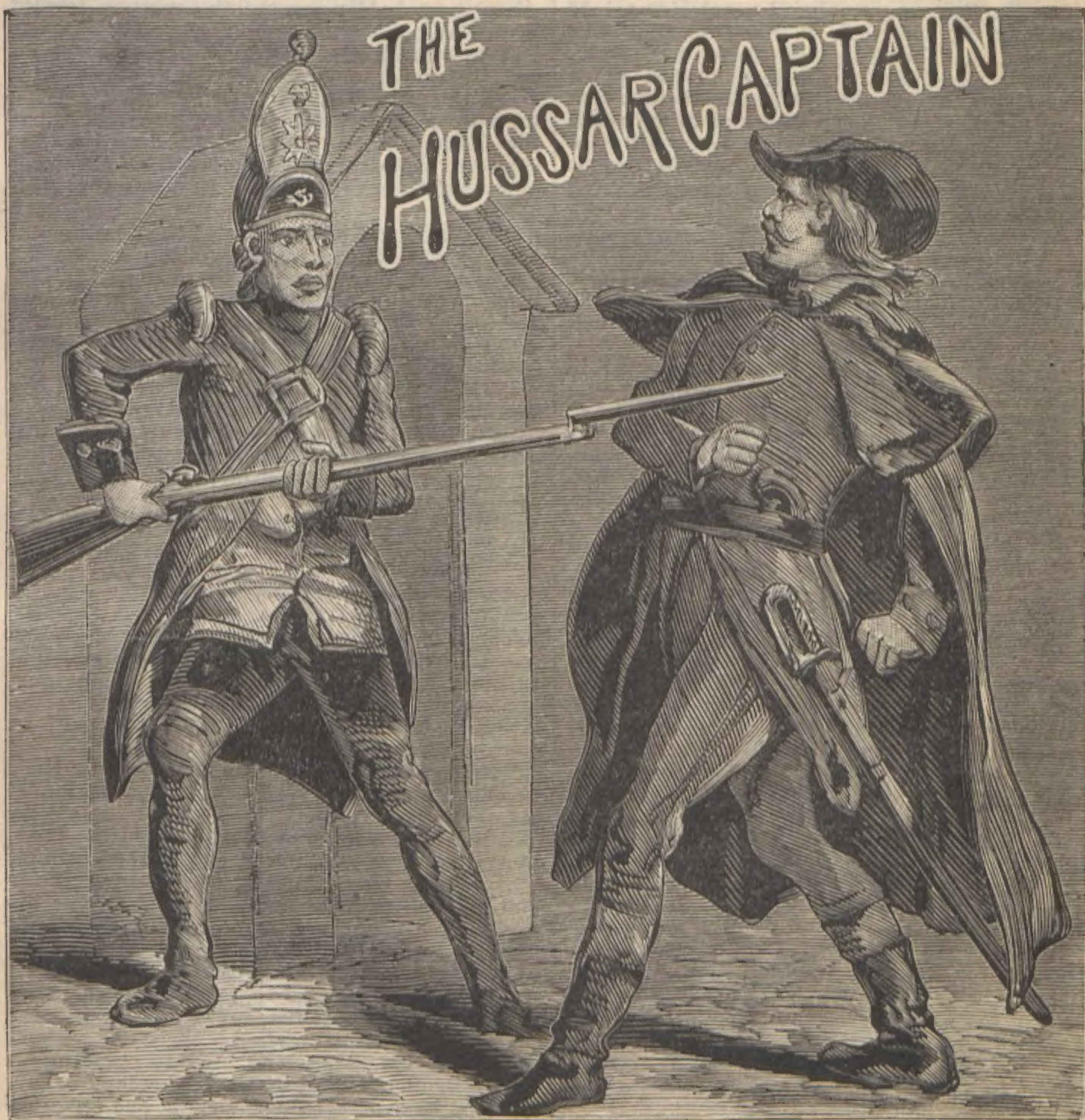
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WITH A BOUND THE ENGLISH SOLDIER WAS IN FRONT OF HIM, HIS BAYONET LEVELED AT HIS HEART,

The Hussar Captain;

OR,

THE HERMIT OF HELL-GATE.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,

AUTHOR OF "THE SEA VIPER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

RUNNING THE GANTLET.

A FIERCE, relentless wind swept howling through the almost deserted streets of the city of New York, one stormy night in the year 1776, and the driving rain had caused all to seek shelter, excepting those whom stern military discipline, or necessity, compelled to face the fury of the blast.

The English army, under General Howe, held possession of the, then as now, metropolis of America, and the soldiers of a hated king walked the thoroughfares by day, and stood guard over the quiet streets by night, their heavy tread echoing sad in the heart of all patriotic citizens, and crushing by mere force all freedom of speech against his majesty, in the presence of his loyal subjects and hirelings from over the sea.

The grenadier in front of the general's quarters had drawn himself far back into his sentry-box, to escape the rude blasts that swept by, and neglecting momentarily rigid duty, was leaning upon his gun and thinking of his far-away home in old England.

So intently was the grenadier engaged in thought, that he failed to notice a quick, firm tread upon the stone pavement near him, until a tall, cloaked form suddenly passed near, the sight of which at once recalled his wandering senses, and in a deep, soldierly voice, he cried:

"Halt! Who comes? friend or foe?"

"Foe, if you prefer the word," answered a stern voice, in which there was a certain threatening ring, and unheeding the challenge, the man in the cloak was passing on, when, with a bound, the English soldier was in front of him, his bayonet leveled at his heart.

"Ha! hireling, you would dare me!" angrily cried the stranger, and as quick as thought he seized the bayonet and then the musket, and, with a remarkable display of physical power, wrenched it from the grasp of the grenadier, who in that act was hurled violently to the ground.

"The guard! ho, the guard!" yelled the prostrate soldier, and in answer to the cry, the sound of hurrying feet was heard, coming from a house near by, wherein the relief was stationed, and the upper rooms of which were used as a military head-quarters.

Throwing the musket into the middle of the street, the stranger strode rapidly down a narrow byway, leading toward the East river, and hearing the sound of voices and running steps in pursuit, he turned into a dark alley, and dashed along it with a familiar tread, until it led him into another broad thoroughfare, where for a moment he paused to listen.

"Ha! they are hemming me in," he muttered,

as the noise of men approaching came to him, and away he again fled for half a dozen squares, hotly pursued, for in the dim light of the streets he could be seen by the soldiers who, in coming from the guard-house, and hearing their comrade's rapidly-told story, had started off in half a dozen different parties, determined to capture or slay the audacious stranger who had disarmed a king's man.

A rapid flight of five minutes brought the fugitive to the river banks, and he was about to search for some means of escape, when again the challenge of a sentinel broke on his ear, and he found himself confronted by a tall dragoon whose drawn saber barred his further progress.

"Halt! or you are a dead man," said the soldier, but the only reply of the stranger was to throw back the cloak from his right arm, and in a second's time he had drawn a glittering sword, and boldly crossed the weapon leveled toward him.

A few rapid passes, a fierce struggle for an instant, and the blade of the stranger beat down the other's guard and fell with terrific force upon the helmet, crashing bodily through the shining brass and cutting deep into the skull of the dragoon, who, with a groan of agony, fell heavily upon the rain-drenched earth.

"Well done, by the glory of the Continental army," cried a deep, manly voice near, as the dragoon fell, and turning, the stranger beheld before him a man of massive frame, with long, flowing hair and beard, as well as he could discover in the dim light of the street, and enveloped from head to foot in a long cloak.

"Then you are no king's man?" asked the stranger, turning to him that had spoken.

"No more than does your slaying that dragoon prove you to be; but come, you would escape from yonder pack of hounds in full cry after you?"

"Yes, I disarmed a grenadier of the guard."

"Then come with me."

"Whither?"

"Do you fear to follow?"

"No, lead on."

The man who had so strangely come upon the scene strode swiftly on for a few paces, and turning sharply around an old dilapidated house, in a few steps reached the banks of the river, where, beneath the shadow of a solitary tree, was a boat in waiting.

"Spring in; quick, for do you not hear their howl of rage at the discovery of the dead dragoon?"

Without a word the man entered the boat, and was quickly followed by his companion, who, seizing the oars, sent the little craft far out over the turbulent waters, until he felt assured they could not be seen from the shore, when he quickly raised and stepped a small mast with a leg-of-mutton sail.

Seizing the tiller, he trimmed in the sheet until it caught the wind, and away dashed the little boat, heading through the darkness and gloom, up the river, and bravely standing up before the fierce wind that was blowing.

"You have a stiff boat, sir, for one seemingly so frail," said the stranger to his companion.

ion, when he observed the manner in which the little craft breasted the waves.

"Yes, Captain Tarleton—"

"By Heaven! you know me, then?"

"As one of the bravest men and ablest officers of Washington's army," returned the other.

"I thank you, sir; but can I ask how it is I am known by you?"

"I recognized you by the light of the street lamp, when you engaged the dragoon; the recognition saved me much trouble, for I was then on my way to seek you at your residence."

"Strange, very strange; I knew not that other than our most secret friends knew I was in the city; but tell me, how is it I am known to you?"

"In good time you shall hear; now I can say no more, for hear you not the roar of the waters through Hell-gate?"

"Yes, I have been listening to their roar for some time; but you point your bow in that direction? Surely you are not going to attempt to pass through Hell-gate in such a frail craft, and in this storm?"

"Ay, am I, Glen Tarleton, for I glory in storm and danger; but I know every rock in yonder foaming chaos of waters, and can safely steer through them the darkest night."

"Steer on! I fear not to follow where any man dare lead."

"Well spoken, and worthy of the dashing Hussar captain, Glen Tarleton; but here, speak not to me now, and as you are a sailor, as well as a soldier, I will let you tend the sheet, for I need both hands for the tiller."

"You seem to know me well indeed; but give me the sheet-rope," and the man addressed as Glen Tarleton took the line in his hand, and arranged himself more comfortably in the boat, which was a long, narrow craft, half sea-skiff, half life-boat, and decked over the whole length, excepting a small cockpit large enough to hold four or five persons.

Though then carrying only a short stump-mast and leg-of-mutton sail, on account of the storm, along the deck of the boat lay a long, slender spar, with boom and gaff, while a bowsprit, working on a hinge, was now raised and tied up perpendicular with the mast then doing service.

In the bottom of the boat, closely rolled up, were a jib and mainsail to be used upon the heavy spars in light winds, and as Glen Tarleton examined, with a seaman's eye, the great depth of the craft, the curving deck and high combing around the cockpit, he could not but feel she was capable of riding out a gale, while her sharp bow and graceful build indicated great speed, when rigged with her large sails, the spars of which were secured to the deck along its length by firm lashings through iron rings.

By the time he had completed his examination, the bow of the boat was cutting swiftly through the mad and whirling waters of Hell-gate, steadily held on her dangerous course by the firm hand of the steersman, whose head was bent forward eagerly, as his eyes pierced the darkness and sought the proper channel.

Wildly bounded the waters around the little vessel, terrific was the roar, and drenching was

the spray, almost annihilating the pouring rain although it fell in torrents; yet on, through the darkness and danger; on through the foaming caldron, bounding, pitching, bending low before the blast, and rolling her decks half under, flew the gallant boat, her helmsman ever keeping her upon the course in spite of the blinding fury of spray and rain, the dashing of the waves and whirling of the mad current, for in those days, kind reader, the passage through Hell-gate was a far different affair from what it is now, and few were the bold mariners who dared venture over its treacherous depths.

A half-hour thus passed, and then the little vessel glided into more quiet waters, and being under shelter of the other bank sailed smoothly along for a mile or more, until the steersman suddenly put the helm hard up, and brought the skiff into a small basin, the narrow entrance to which was but ten feet in width, and so hidden from any one passing on the river as not to be visible the length of the boat distant.

Glen Tarleton glanced above and around him as the boat became stationary, and beheld frowning rocks towering high overhead, and surrounding the quiet basin, which in the darkness, appeared scarcely larger than a good-sized room; but ere he had time to comment on the strange place, his companion drew the craft alongside a shelf of rock, and said:

"Remain quiet an instant, Captain Tarleton, and I will return."

So saying, he nimbly sprung from the boat, and disappeared into what appeared to be to his companion the very face of the cliff.

CHAPTER II.

THE HERMIT OF HELL-GATE.

A FEW moments only was the helmsman gone, and then he suddenly appeared, holding in his hand a lantern, which lit up the rocky sides of the basin, and displayed the mouth of a cavern opening upon the shelf against which the skiff was moored.

"Spring ashore, Captain Tarleton, and follow me, please," and obeying the request, the officer walked on after his guide, who led the way into the cave, which was low and narrow at first, and then abruptly opened into a spacious, rock-bound chamber, rudely but comfortably furnished.

Glen Tarleton glanced quickly around him, and discovered that he stood in a chamber in the solid rock, with apparently two passages leading therefrom; one through which he had just entered, the other upon the opposite side, and smaller than that leading to the boat.

The walls were rock, as was the flooring, and perfectly dry, while in one side of the cavern burned in an artificial grate a wood fire, imparting a warmth to the place, and the smoke escaping through a wooden funnel leading up to the roof of the cavern.

The floor of the cave was covered with a thick matting, and the furniture of the underground chamber consisted of a small bed, a lounge, and an easy-chair or two, with a table and shelf of books.

Upon one side of the fireplace was a shelf containing an oven, gridiron, coffee-pot, and a few

dishes, while an open chest near by was used as a store-room for provisions.

Hanging upon pegs above the bed was a quantity of clothing of great variety, from the rude fisherman's suit to the brilliant uniform of an English officer, and in one corner was a cot upon the stone floor, evidently the bed of some humble individual.

Upon brackets rested a number of guns, pistols, swords and a saddle and bridle, while the table in the center of the room held a writing-desk, inkstand, paper and pens.

All these things Glen Tarleton took in by a rapid glance around him, for the light from the lamp upon the table and the ruddy glare of the fire, gave the rock-bound chamber a bright and rather cheerful appearance.

"Captain Tarleton, you are welcome to my humble cavern home; be seated, sir, and excuse me for a moment," said the strange host, as he motioned his guest to a chair, and withdrew from the room by the opposite entrance from which they had entered.

Glen Tarleton stood a moment in surprise, and bewilderment, for he knew not what to think of his remarkable guide and his equally remarkable abode; but a brave and determined man, willing to take circumstances as they came, he took from his shoulders his heavy cloak, and cast it upon a chair near the fire, and the act displayed a tall, well-knit frame, gracefully formed, upright and martial in bearing, clad in a suit of gray, with top-boots, and a belt around his waist containing pistols and a short sword.

Throwing aside also the slouching hat he wore, his face was revealed, a dark, daring, handsome face, every feature expressive of intelligence, determination and manly dignity.

It was the countenance of a man of thirty, perhaps, with fiery black eyes, brown waving hair, and mustache shading the mouth, whereon the look of decision resting, did not destroy its expression of kindness and generosity.

Calmly he seated himself in the easy-chair, and his sword, that a short while before had done such deadly service, lay ready across his knees, the hilt turned toward his right hand, while the young captain idly gazed into the fire.

Soon the hum of voices broke on his ear and he quickly glanced in the direction of the sound and then loosened a pistol in its holster.

The next instant there entered the tall and muscular form of this strange guide, followed by a negro fully his equal in size and possessing a bright and intelligent face, and for a man so large, a quick and active movement.

"Captain, I left you longer alone than I intended; but I had to go some distance to seek Rebel, my servant here, who was gathering firewood in the forest."

"Your cave also has a passage leading to the land?" said Captain Tarleton in an inquiring tone.

"Yes, sir; but one equally well concealed from all curious eyes as is the river opening; but now, while Rebel prepares us a repast, we will discuss matters of deep moment to both of us," and the host drew a chair up to the fire and sat facing the officer, who gazed with interest upon his majestic and graceful form, and

bold face, which was almost hidden by the gray beard which fell nearly to his waist.

Having thrown aside the long and heavy cloak that had enveloped him, and the storm hat he wore, he stood revealed in the garb of a hunter, for his dress, hunting-shirt, leggings, moccasins and all was that of a frontiersman, or hunter, while in his belt he wore a brace of pistols, besides a long knife and a broad and curved blade, partaking of both the cimeter and yataghan of the East.

Though the glowing locks and beard were almost white, and indicated age, there was something in the clear, smooth complexion and bright, steel-gray eyes, that caused the officer to believe him yet, comparatively, a young man, and his quick movements also aided in this belief.

For a moment he seemed unconscious of the fixed gaze upon him, but then smiling, said:

"You doubtless think us a strange pair, Rebel and myself, captain? And, in truth, I believe we are; eh, Rebel?"

"Yes, massa, we is strange folks, me t'ink," answered the negro, in a voice so deep as to cause the officer to start and bend his gaze also upon him.

After a moment's hesitation Captain Tarleton, said:

"You were kind enough to do me a great service to-night, sir, for I believe without your aid I could not have escaped my pursuers; for your timely aid I thank you, but now I would ask who it is that I address, for I appear to be known to you."

"Yes, Captain Tarleton, for I have before seen you, although you do not remember me! Hast ever heard of the Hermit of Hell-gate?"

"Ay, that have I, often and often."

"He stands before you, sir."

Glen Tarleton gazed upon the man before him with surprise and admiration, for often had he heard the story of a solitary man living near the waters of Hell-gate, who time and again had come out in his small boat and saved many a ship from destruction, by taking the helm and steering her safely through the mad channel, always refusing gold for his services, and ever keeping away from the haunts of his fellow-men.

"You are, then, he that is known as the Hell-gate Hermit?" he asked, after a pause.

"Yes, Captain Tarleton; but now that we know each other, at least by name, let us enter upon a more important matter, for the hours creep on apace, and you may remember I told you I was going to seek you, when we met so opportunely."

"Yes, sir; I thought then how strange it was that you should know of my being in New York, for I was there, I believed, without the knowledge of any but my most trusted friends."

"You were there upon a mission that would have lost you your life, had your presence been known—"

"Ha! how know you this?"

"As I know many other things, by having gained the information from others."

"You speak in riddles, Sir Hermit, and I pray you explain yourself."

"I will endeavor to do so; but first let us fully understand each other:

"You are an officer of Washington's army—a captain of the most dashing command of Ranger Hussars in the service of your country, and are now absent from your men upon a mission of great danger.

"I am the Hermit of Hell-gate, a foe to tyranny, a friend of liberty, and in the secret service of General Washington; but here! Rebel has prepared us a substantial meal, and after its discussion, we will discuss political, private and military affairs," and motioning his guest to a seat at the table, the Hermit also drew up a chair, and without delay the two indulged in a hearty repast.

CHAPTER III.

A DANGEROUS MISSION.

AFTER enjoying the hospitality of the Hermit's table, Glen Tarleton turned to him and said:

"Now, sir, we will the more fully understand each other?"

"Yes: you are, I believe, a friend of Colonel Mercer Vancourt?"

"I am, sir."

"You are aware that he entered New York city, a few days since, to visit his wife and daughter, and being discovered, is now held as a spy?"

"Yes, well do I know it; and furthermore, am aware that he will be hung as a spy; that is, unless he can be saved," said Glen Tarleton, with deep feeling.

"Yes, unless he can be saved—and he *must be saved!*" said the Hermit.

"True, he must, and—"

"Do not hesitate, Captain Tarleton, but continue; or shall I say what you would have said?—'to save him you entered New York city.'"

"How you are aware of this, I know not, sir; but it is true I came to save him, and I am determined to do so at all risks," and the decided look upon the face of the young officer proved he meant what he said.

"Listen to me, Captain Tarleton; the tie that binds you to Colonel Vancourt, I have been told, is a strong one, and when I heard you had left your command to accomplish by strategy what could not be done by force, I determined to aid you; but, ere I set to work, a dispatch from General Washington called me to him, and from him I learned that he had given you permission to undertake the release of his favorite officer, and he begged me to seek you at your home in New York, for, armed as you were with the papers you had shown him, he did not doubt you could safely enter the city."

"But how did you first learn of my intention?"

"That I can not now make known to you; but I promised the general to aid you, and to do so, was on my way to seek you."

"You are, then, a spy in Washington's service, Sir Hermit?"

"Spy is a hard word, captain; I am a secret service man, and General Howe of the English army trusts me fully."

"General Howe?"

"Yes."

"Why, you but just said you were in Washington's service!" and Glen turned a suspicious glance upon his companion, who quietly answered:

"And so am I; I am playing a double game."

"And one of fearful danger."

"True; but I love danger; but now let us to work, and that you may fully trust me, please read this letter," and the Hermit placed in the hands of Glen Tarleton a sealed envelope.

Breaking the seal, the young man read:

"CAPTAIN GLEN TARLETON:—

"Sir:—You can trust the bearer with your life.
"WASHINGTON."

"It is all right, Sir Hermit, and now I will give you my plan for the rescue, which is, to seek the spot where Vancourt is confined and attempt to bribe the sentinel who keeps watch over him."

"Under some circumstances that might succeed, Captain Tarleton, but now it can not, for so determined is General Howe to hang Colonel Vancourt, that he has placed over him as guards confidential officers wearing the dress of common soldiers."

"The prison of Colonel Vancourt is a small cottage upon the banks of East river; it is secluded, and excepting the woman who owns the house, and the guards, none others are there—"

"Then by a bold move, a party of my men might be taken thither, overpower the guard, release the colonel and escape by boats under your guidance."

"No, captain; I have another plan to propose, and one which, instead of losing a few gallant Continental soldiers, will release the colonel, and also gain for us some dozen prisoners, besides capturing an officer high in favor with Lord Howe."

"I will be guided by you, sir."

"Thanks; now I wish you to enter my boat with Rebel here, and he will run you around the city's point and up the Hudson river, toward the Bergen Heights, and he will then conduct you to the cabin of a woodsman who will bear a message to your Hussars—by the way, are there any seamen among you?"

"Yes, sir, many of them were farmers in the summer and sailors in the winter, until they became soldiers."

"So much the better for all of us; but, let me continue: order your Hussars to immediately come to the Heights, and there, hidden within an inlet, you will find a small schooner at anchor, one that belongs to Lord Howe, but which you must take the liberty of borrowing, and from your rangers form a crew of some thirty men, get up sail and run your vessel around the city's point and drop anchor just off the spot from whence I took you."

"But what will prevent the seizure of the vessel, for you must know it will be daylight ere I can brave the waters of the Hudson?"

"Yes; in the schooner's cabin you will find suits to disguise yourself and crew, from Continental Rangers into naval seamen of Great Britain. See here—" and so saying the Hermit placed in the hands of Glen Tarleton a large paper, bearing the official seal of England and the signature of Lord Howe.

Glancing over the contents the young officer read:

"By order of General, Lord Howe, Commander-in-chief of His Majesty's Army in New York, Captain Sutherland of the sloop-of-war Vulture, will detail a lieutenant and thirty men for special duty, the particulars of which they will learn from the inclosed instructions, which the officer in charge is commanded to obey, with dispatch. HOWE."

"Well?" simply said Glen Tarleton.

"Well it is, sir, for the Vulture left this night on a cruise South, and I took from the orderly, who is an ally of mine, this dispatch, and hence—"

"Myself and crew are to impersonate the lieutenant and men of the Vulture?"

"Exactly, and you will bring the schooner around and anchor at the spot I designated, until nightfall, in fact until later, and then I will come aboard with my party, all of whom, excepting Colonel Vancourt, must be at once made prisoners."

"This is a daring game, Sir Hermit."

"Ay is it, and I like it for its daring; but now you must be off, and I also, for I must see Lord Howe and let him know that the detachment from the Vulture will go aboard the schooner to-night, and be in readiness for a secret expedition he was to send me upon in the vessel."

"How mean you, sir?"

"Simply that I was to embark upon an expedition, which, though apparently successful to the British army, really did the Americans no harm—you see I must curry favor with General Howe by some seemingly bold act now and then."

"You are a wonderful man, sir; now I am ready to depart," said Glen Tarleton, rising, and in a few moments more the Hermit, his guest, and the negro, Rebel, were in the little boat, which soon darted out of her hiding-place, and headed for the New York shore.

Cautiously approaching the bank, the Hermit sprung out, pressed the hand of Glen Tarleton, and walked away in the darkness, while Rebel took the helm, and with the young officer seated near him, shoved the boat once more into the stream, and shaped her course down the river in the direction of the Battery.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TWO FAIR PATRIOTS.

UPON the same evening of the attack upon the grenadier by the Ranger Hussar, there were seated within the sumptuously-furnished library of a handsome mansion in New York city, two maidens, and earnestly were they conversing together, while upon their beautiful faces rested a look of sad anxiety.

Both were, indeed, beautiful, though as different as light and darkness, for Salome Tarleton was tall in stature, and yet not too tall, for her figure was exquisitely molded, and her every movement was one of grace; the eyes were intensely large, brilliant and full of intelligence, the complexion dark, and each feature of the face perfect, while her hair, worn encircling her proud head like a coronet, was black as ebony and most luxuriant.

Dressed in a suit of dark blue cloth, plainly made, it hung in graceful folds around her, as

she half sat, half reclined upon a silken lounge, while upon a low stool, her arms resting upon the divan, sat the other maiden, Lucille Vancourt, a perfect little fairy in face and form, with dreamy blue eyes, fair complexion, and sunny hair arranged in a most *neglige* but becoming manner around her haughty head, erect with an air of refinement and pride.

Both maidens were about the same age, not yet out of their teens, and most intimate friends.

And both were strong, uncompromising rebels, glorying in the title that made those traitors who boldly resisted the tyranny of a cruel monarch.

Salome Tarleton was the sister of the Hussar Captain, and the two children had lived with their widowed mother in their elegant New York mansion, for Judge Tarleton had left his family great wealth, at his death, a few years before the opening of this story.

It had been a happy home until the breaking out of the war, and then the young patriot had bid adieu to mother and sister, and boldly cast his sword with the American army.

Handsome, brave to a fault, of a noble, generous nature, and at all times a gentleman, Glen Tarleton was most popular with all who knew him, and soon won his way by his gallantry up the tottering ladder of fame, to in the end equip, at his own expense, a gallant company of Ranger Hussars from the young men of his acquaintance.

With his command he had rendered invaluable service to Washington, who had, a short while before the Hussar Captain is introduced to the reader, ordered him on duty upon the Jersey shore, and in the immediate vicinity of New York, where he added to his fame by his daring expeditions night and day upon the British lines, for, having owned a yacht until the commencement of the war, Glen was also a good seaman, and had led several attacks by water against the outer guard-boats of the enemy's fleet.

Mrs. Tarleton and Salome heard with fond pride of the noble service rendered by the son and brother, and being within the lines of the enemy, and their lordly mansion a favorite resort for the English officers, they enjoyed, secretly the mortification felt by Lord Howe and his officers at their inability to capture the Hussar Captain.

Well did Lord Howe know how thoroughly loyal to the American cause were the mother and sister of the daring ranger captain, but he admired and respected the ladies, was charmed with the beauty and wit of Salome, and always delighted in a visit or dinner at the hospitable mansion, for Mrs. Tarleton was not so impolitic as to bring down English vengeance upon her, but in fact was anxious to have around her the great men in the British service, hoping thereby to gain from them many an item of news that might benefit the army of Washington.

Another there was who daily heard with a beating heart of the courage of Glen Tarleton, and that was the little sunny-haired belle, Lucille Vancourt.

The father of Lucille, Colonel Mercer Vancourt, was an American of wealth and position, who

had sided with the colonies at the breaking out of the Revolution, and risen to be a prominent officer, and became one of General Washington's most valuable and trusted *aids*.

Colonel Vancourt had married, while on a visit to England, the daughter of an earl, and though she had willingly come to America with her husband and adopted it as her home, Mrs. Vancourt still was loyal in feeling to her native land, and it pained her deeply to see the man she had promised to "honor and obey" league himself with traitors, as she called the Americans.

Thus, while Colonel Vancourt was serving the American army, Mrs. Vancourt remained loyal to England, filled her parlors nightly with British officers, and discarded boldly all sympathy with her husband and his compatriots.

But Lucille, the only child of this ill-matched pair, was an American heart and soul, and by her bold speeches soon won the title of "Little Rebel," given her by the British officers; but then, Lucille was beautiful, witty, an heiress, and an irrepressible coquette, and her daring rejoicings at the defeats of the English and triumphs of the Americans was forgiven if not forgotten, by her foes, many of whom would have been most anxious to capture the pretty patriot and make her a loyal wife.

Yet Lucille Vancourt was true to one, and that one Glen Tarleton, for, from the time the maiden was twelve years of age, the two had loved each other, and since her sixteenth year had been engaged.

The handsome residence of Mrs. Vancourt and the lordly mansion of Mrs. Tarleton adjoined, or, that is, a wicket fence only divided the grounds, which were handsomely ornamented and sloped away down to the banks of the noble Hudson, for in those days, reader, there were stately villas in New York City, where now are to be found only the crowded and mighty warehouses and stores.

In spite of the storm that was raging that night over New York City, Lucille Vancourt had bundled herself up securely in wraps, and hastily run across the grounds to the home of her friend.

She found Salome in the library, a book in her hand, but listening to the roar of the storm without, instead of perusing the pages before her.

"Well, Lucille, this is a blessing; but how did you dare venture forth on such a night?" and Salome warmly welcomed her sweet companion, who, casting aside her wet wraps, threw herself weeping upon the lounge.

"Come, Lucille, tell me quick of Glen; has aught befallen—"

"No, no, no; it is for poor father I am distressed, for mamma just heard from Lord Howe, and he says that there is but one course to pursue and that is to try him as a spy."

"A spy! Does not Lord Howe know that he entered the British lines in full uniform, and only to see his wife and daughter?"

"Yes, but he says he can not do otherwise than condemn him to death."

"What does your mother say, Lucille?"

"She is greatly distressed of course; but then, she is so loyal to England, that she says that

military law must take its course with father as a traitor to the king, and verily do I believe she will raise no voice to save him. Oh my poor, poor father, what a death will be yours!" and the unhappy maiden cast herself again weeping upon the lounge.

"Lucille, listen: four days ago when I first heard of the capture of your father I sent to one who I know has the power and inclination to serve me—"

"You refer to Lord Lionel Livingstone, Salome?"

"Yes," answered the beautiful maiden, while a blush stole over her face.

"He is a noble fellow, and I know will serve you if in his power."

"He is a noble fellow, and he did serve me, Lucille."

"Did serve you, and how? Quick, tell me if there is hope for my poor father!"

"There is hope. Sit here while I tell you all;" and seating herself upon the lounge, Salome Tarleton motioned her companion to her side, but Lucille threw herself carelessly upon a stool near by, and leaning her arms upon the divan eagerly looked up into her friend's face, to read what hope rested thereon for the life of her father.

CHAPTER V.

THE SECRET OF THE PASS.

IN anxious expectancy Lucille Vancourt awaited for her friend to speak, who after stepping to each door of the library and firmly closing it, returned and said:

"Yes, he did serve me, for I found from what I heard that your father would be condemned to death, as his valuable services have rendered him most obnoxious to the British, and Lord Howe is delighted to have an opportunity of ridding himself of a dangerous enemy.

"Then I wrote a note to Lord Lionel, who you know possessed wonderful influence with the English commander, and begged him to at once come to see me, which he did."

"Doubtless," dryly said Lucille, while a faint smile, like an April shower, came over her face.

"Yes, he came, you tease, and I told him to get me a pass which would bring into the lines one who I knew would move everything to serve your father—"

"And that one was—"

"Glen Tarleton."

"Oh, God! Salome, have you then brought your brother into the lion's den?" cried Lucille.

"Yes, Lucille, this very night will Glen be with us, and though I tremble for the danger he will incur, I know that through him only can your father be released."

"You forget you place him in equal danger with my father, and that both may be lost."

"No, Lucille, I have fully weighed the danger; but I depend upon the sound judgment and daring of my brother to settle upon some plan—"

"Then none is agreed upon—"

"No; I wish just to see Glen, who returned me word by the same trusty servant I sent with the pass and my letter, that he would be here to-night—hark!"

As Salome ceased speaking there came a loud knock upon the door of entrance to the mansion,

the brazen notes of the knocker hardly heard in the storm.

"God grant it be Glen. Hold, Caesar; I will open the door," exclaimed Salome, rising, and motioning the negro back as he approached, she walked down the hall and opened the door, letting in a furious gust of wind and rain, accompanied by a tall, muffled figure.

"Ah, captain, I am glad to see you. Enter the library, please," she said, in a voice loud enough for the butler to hear, as he descended to the culinary depths below stairs, and crossing the hall, she motioned the officer into the library, where after closing and locking the door, she was enfolded in the arms of the Hussar Captain.

Releasing herself, after awhile, Salome said:

"But, brother, another is here to claim a kiss and give you welcome;" and then Lucille, with a bound, sprung from behind a curtain, where she had hidden herself upon recognizing the well-known tread of her lover.

Glen Tarleton also greeted the maiden affectionately, and then, casting aside the heavy cloak he wore, stood revealed in the uniform of a captain in the Continental army.

"Oh, brother!"

"Oh, Glen!"

"Why, what is the matter with you? Does the sight of a *rebel* uniform gladden your eyes to such an extent as to bewilder your brains?" laughed Glen, as he beheld the look of amazement upon the faces of his sister and Lucille.

"No, brother; but what a risk you run in that uniform in our English-guarded streets!"

"Not as much as though I were in disguise, for, dressed as I am, I cannot be called a spy. But Lucille, my darling, bitterly do I regret the unfortunate position your father has gotten himself into; yet cheer up, for willing hearts and ready hands can do much to save him."

"Glen, this is noble of you, and my father and myself will ever remember you; and yet, Glen, you are yourself almost in equal danger with the man you would save," said Lucille, with the deepest feeling.

"No; your father is a prisoner, I am free; but, Salome, I received your letter and am here."

"Yes, and together we must plan some means of rescue."

"Where is the colonel confined?"

"In the cottage of a widow woman who lives upon the banks of East river," answered Lucille.

"Then, after a while I will wend my way thither and reconnoiter the position, so as to fully understand all the advantages and disadvantages in the way of a bold rescue; then I will seek the secret club of our friends in the city, and we will decide upon some plan of action ere I return."

"You will return home then, brother?"

"Yes; for I would see my mother, and I can remain hidden during to-morrow, and then at night we can act, and I pray this storm may continue, for it will greatly aid us; but, Salome, whom have you for a friend so influential in the English army that he can obtain for me a pass to visit New York?"

Salome blushed bright crimson, and Lucille answered teasingly:

"Oh, that is a secret, Sir Curiosity."

"A secret?"

"No, brother, I will tell you: it is Lord Lionel Livingstone."

"What! the young English noble who has had such a romantic life?"

"Yes."

"Well, from all accounts, he is a splendid fellow, and it is a pity we have not his good right arm to aid us."

"Still, Glen, he is willing to serve us secretly."

"Serve *you*, Salome; is it not so?"

"Yes, Glen, and in serving me, do you also a favor."

"Well, I am thankful to him; but does he know your plans?"

"No; I told him I did not wish Colonel Vancourt to die, and begged him to aid me, and he then gave me a pass to allow a man upon secret service to enter the lines."

"I promised Lord Lionel not to give the pass to other than a man of honor, and that he would only enter New York for the purpose of freeing Colonel Vancourt from prison, and in no way take advantage of any discovery he might make while here."

"Does he suspect the person to whom the pass was given?"

"I think he *suspects*, Glen, and therefore he was the more willing to get it for me, and also to make it safe as possible to the bearer."

"It is safe enough, for it gives the bearer permission to go through and out of the city at leisure, accompanied by as many as three companions, unquestioned, and the paper is signed by Lord Howe, and his private seal affixed alongside the public one."

"He promised he would in no way compromise the bearer of the pass," said Salome.

"And he has kept his word; but, sister mine, you appear to have a great influence over Lord Lionel, as he has over Howe. How is this?"

"We are friends, brother, and he—he—"

"Loves her very shadow, Glen; indeed he does; but I won't say any more," said Lucille, her eyes sparkling with mischief, for now that her lover had come to save her father, she felt no longer sad and desponding.

"Well, sis, I will not tease you more. Lord Lionel is an Englishman and hence an enemy; but he is a gentleman, and has certainly done us all a great favor, and I would gladly meet him to thank him; but now I must be off, so I will leave you two together while I go abroad, to see what I can discover hopeful in the case of Colonel Vancourt, whom I pledged my life to save from death."

Hastily embracing his sister, and the maiden of his love, and promising to return ere midnight, Glen Tarleton quietly left the mansion, and with his heavy cloak wrapped closely around him, once again braved the fury of the storm, as he wended his way in the direction of the secret club of the Revolutionists.

His challenge by the grenadier and the haughty and defiant reply he had given—his disarming of the soldier, flight and combat, in which he slew the sentinel by the river, and then opportunely escaped through the agency of the Hermit of Hell-gate, are already known to the reader.

He did not return to the shelter of his home that night, and the fair watchers watched in vain.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SCHOONER.

WHEN the small craft, containing the giant negro and Glen Tarleton, had made a stretch half across the river toward the Williamsburg shore, the sable helmsman let her fall off gradually until before the gale she bounded away with a flowing sheet toward the Battery.

Rapidly the dim lights of the streets flashed by, and in half an hour the negro had rounded the point of the town, and was heading toward the Jersey shore.

"Dis wind blow like de great Jerusalem, massa, so I'se gwine to ax you to 'tend de sheet while I fetch her round."

"You are going to stand up the Hudson then?"

"Yes, massa."

"We had better jibe then, for we will lose time by going about," said Glen.

"No, massa; we lose ourselves if we jibe in dis here gale, 'cause de boat won't stand it."

"All right; she appeared to me stiff enough to stand a tornado. Steady, there, while I trim in the sheet," answered Glen. And under the able management of her crew of two, the stanch little sail-boat swept round, wallowed terribly for an instant in the mad waves; but, feeling the wind upon her starboard quarter, once more rushed on through the waters, this time heading up the broad Hudson, that was wildly lashed and fretted by the fierce blast.

On flew the brave boat, and again the city's lights flashed by upon the right hand, until after a half hour's run they were left far behind, and only the gloomy shores could be seen.

An hour passed, and then the helmsman began to steer for the Jersey shore, and in a short while ran the boat in under the dark and overhanging forest-clad banks, and skillfully piloted her into a quiet inlet, where the fury of the gale could not reach her.

"You understand this place well, Rebel, to find your way on a night like this," said the Hussar Captain, in admiration of the skill and daring of the negro.

"Me know him well, massa; but here we is at de schooner."

"At the schooner—where?"

"Dar she be, ag'in' de bank, wid de trees all around her," and the negro pointed landward.

"You have cat's eyes, Rebel, for I can see nothing of a vessel."

"Ha, ha, ha! I got de eagle's eyes for seein', massa; but den I no see de schooner, nuther; I only know she's dar."

"Ah! that explains your extraordinary vision. Yes, as I live, we are alongside a vessel."

"Didn't I told you so, massa! Now, you jist jump aboard, and I'll soon have things all right."

Glen did as directed by his sable guard, and in a few moments the negro drew from a cuddy of the craft they had come in a large dark-lantern, and unfolding the slide, the Hussar Captain discovered that he was on the decks of a schooner of some sixty tons, sharp in the

bows, narrow, deep, and of a build decidedly saucy, with tapering, raking masts, and a long, penciled bowsprit.

"This is a beautiful vessel, Rebel."

"Yes, massa; dis schooner am a gay craft, and she is as fast as her name," answered the negro.

"What is her name, Rebel?"

"She name de Wind."

"The Wind—a good name truly for a swift vessel; and I do not wonder that she deserves the cognomen when I look at her build," said Glen, taking the lantern and turning the light upon the different portions of the craft.

"But who found this secure retreat, and how came the schooner here, Rebel?"

"Well, I tell you. You know my massa, de Hermit, he know all round dis country same as 'twas a book, and den he get Massa General Howe to let him hab dis vessel to use for his expeditions, and when he not use her, he keep her hidden away here, snug as a flea on a dog."

"Yes, this spot appears to be secure enough; but are there no men on the schooner?"

"No, massa; she lock tight and I got de key," and so saying, Rebel took from his pocket a bundle of keys, and in a few moments had opened the cabin, which, upon entering, Glen found to be spacious, comfortable, and well-furnished.

"Now, Rebel, we will go ashore and seek the cabin of the woodman whom your master spoke of."

"Yes, massa; I leave my boat here, and we go ashore in de schooner's gig."

"All right; but should we not return before daylight is there no danger of the schooner or your boat being discovered?"

"See dem trees, massa?"

"Yes."

"Well, dey is higher den de masts ob de schooner, and den no one can get in here from de land, for you see de rocks is too steep all round."

"But from the river, Rebel?"

"No, capt'in, de channel in here is as windin' as de road to heben; and 'sides, dar's no opening wisible from de riber."

"All right, Rebel, my good fellow: now let us take the boat."

The powerful negro soon had launched the schooner's gig, and with strong strokes was pulling out of the inlet again into the Hudson.

Slowly he wended his way along the bank for half a mile, and then a light was visible, coming from a small cabin, for the clouds having broken away, the night was not as dark as when they had sailed up the river.

"Tony at home," said the negro, as he landed and drew the boat up on the shore.

Advancing to the door, Glen gave a loud knock thereon, and a rough voice called out from within:

"Who's there?"

"Friends."

"A man has few friends, nowadays, and this is no hour to have those few visiting him," returned the same voice.

"It am me, Massa Tony," said Rebel.

"You! Then it's an imp of his Satanic Majesty, and not himself in person," laughed the

man inside, and immediately the door was opened, and displayed a personage of perhaps fifty years of age, with muscular, thick-set frame, and a face combining boldness, kindness and intelligence.

"It is you, then, Rebel? Well, you are always welcome, so let me shake your paw— Ah, who have we here?" and the eye of the woodman fell upon the young Hussar Captain.

"Dat am a pertikeler 'quaintance of my massa, and he am come to see you by his pertikeler request."

"You are welcome, sir; any friend of—of—the Hermit is welcome in my rude home."

"You are Tony Wood, I believe?" said Glen, struck by the polite and frank manner of the man.

"Anthony Wood, yes, sir; and most willing to serve you."

"That you can do, for I am anxious to obtain a horse to ride at once to the encampment of the Ranger Hussars."

"I have two horses, sir, and will myself go with you to show you the road, for it is a very dark night; but I hope you have fair papers, for the young Hussar Captain is as quick as a hawk, and has owl's eyes for those who are not friendly to the cause."

"You give me a good character, Mr. Wood; I am Glen Tarleton."

"Indeed! Captain Tarleton, it gives me great pleasure to meet you, and as I now know you to be the Ranger Hussar, I will tell you that I established myself here only a few days since to open communication with you."

"Then it is lucky for both of us to meet thus; but now to business," and in a few words Glen Tarleton made known to the woodman his intention of at once seeking the encampment of the Rangers for the purpose of returning with a number of his men and embarking in the schooner.

The horses were soon saddled, and leaving Rebel at the cabin to await their return, Glen and Tony mounted and rode rapidly away through the darkness toward the Ranger camp, distant some seven miles.

Sparing not the spur, the horsemen pressed swiftly on, and in less than an hour were hailed with:

"Halt. Who comes there?"

"Friends," answered Glen.

"Dismount, friends; advance and give the countersign," was the reply of the sentinel.

Rapidly dismounting, Glen walked forward, was recognized by the sentinel, and a few moments after, had entered his own tent, which was then occupied by his lieutenant, Morris Saville, a daring, dashing Virginian, as bold a rider and handsome an officer as there was in the Continental army.

"Welcome back, Captain Tarleton. God grant you have been successful in the release of Colonel Vancourt!" said the lieutenant, as he grasped his commander's hand.

"Not yet, Saville; but there is every hope of success; but come, I wish thirty men from the Rangers, those that are seamen, and then a detachment to go with them to bring their horses back."

In a few moments more the Hussar Captain

had selected his men, all were mounted and at full speed set forth upon the return to the cabin of the woodman, where they arrived without adventure, and just as day began to break, the sharp nose of the schooner was turned from off her woodland retreat, the breeze filled her sails, and away she darted out into the dashing waters of the majestic Hudson.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TELL-TALE GLOVE.

To the two maidens the stormy night wore wearily and slowly away, and in their bosoms raged the deepest anxiety regarding the non-arrival of Glen Tarleton.

Lucille had sent word by a servant to her mother that she would remain with Salome all night, and thus in this anxiety the two maidens were cheered by the presence of each other.

Afraid to retire to their room, they sat together in the library, too anxious to sleep, and starting at each rude blast of the wind that caused the windows to rattle.

Slowly the hours crept on, and with the light of day the storm broke away and the sun appeared to gladden the earth; yet in the hearts of the two watchers there was no sunshine, for they believed that the Hussar Captain had also fallen into the hands of the English.

Toward breakfast-time a stately, handsome matron entered the room, and seeing the maidens, said, pleasantly:

"Good-morning, Lucille; good-morning, my daughter! You are early risers."

"Lucille remained here last night, mother, and—and—we have not been to bed; but sit down, and I will tell you all;" and in a few words Salome made her mother acquainted with the visit of Glen and his departure.

"God grant evil has not befallen my poor boy; but let us hope for the best; and now, girls, come in to breakfast and cheer up, for the servants must not suspect anything;" and Mrs. Tarleton led the way into the breakfast-room.

Ere the meal was concluded, the butler entered with a card and laid it before Salome.

"Ask him to come in here, Caesar; mother, it is Lord Lionel."

The next instant Caesar ushered into the room a man of striking appearance.

Over six feet in height, he was yet so gracefully formed as not to show the inches he towered above ordinary men, while his carriage was dignified and most graceful, as he advanced toward the table, politely bowing to the ladies.

If his figure was noticeable for its size and elegance, his face was even more so, for it held wonderful fascinations, combining the beauty of a woman with the courage and boldly-outlined expressions of a man.

"Lord Lionel, I am indeed happy to meet you, for I intended writing you a note after breakfast," said Salome, offering the nobleman a seat beside her.

"Indeed! Then would that I had remained away until I had received the precious missive," answered Lord Lionel in a voice peculiarly rich and well modulated.

"But, how can I serve you, Miss Tarleton?" he continued, as his eye detected the pale and careworn features of Salome and Lucille,

"As we have finished breakfast, let us adjourn to the library, and I will tell you, my lord, for again am I going to trespass upon your kindness," said Salome, rising and leading the way from the breakfast-room, followed by Lucille, Mrs. Tarleton and the nobleman.

"Be seated, my lord, and as what you were kind enough to do for me is no secret to my mother or Miss Vancourt, let me at once say that my brother—it was he to whom I sent the pass—arrived last night and visited us here, but left soon after, promising to return ere midnight."

"And he has not returned?"

"No, my lord, and I fear some evil has befallen him."

"I think not; in fact, I am assured not, or else I would have heard it, for you may know, Miss Tarleton, I am honored with the confidence of Lord Howe."

"Yes, and I felt assured you could find out for me, had he been arrested."

"No, he is not a prisoner, I am certain, for the capture of the Hussar Captain would create too great a stir in the city to keep it quiet; no, he has been detained somewhere, and yet, to relieve your minds I will at once sally forth and endeavor to find some trace of him; so, with the hope that you will cheer up, ladies, I will say, *au revoir*."

Leaving the mansion, Lord Lionel wended his way in the direction of the head-quarters of General Howe, and upon his arrival was at once admitted by the sentinel, who politely saluted him, although he was not in a military dress.

"Well, Lord Lionel, you are early, but have you breakfasted?" said Lord Howe, a fine-looking man, with a military bearing, and clad in the uniform of a commander of the English army.

"Yes, my lord, thanks; but do not let me disturb you."

"Oh, no, I have finished—Lord Livingstone, this is our ally from over the sea, General Knyphausen," and General Howe presented the young nobleman to a man standing at the window, dressed in the uniform of a Hessian officer.

"I ish very glad to meet you, my Lord Livingstone," said General Knyphausen, with a decided German accent.

"Be seated, my lord. General Knyphausen, this gentleman is one of my pets."

"He ish a pig bet, Lord Howe," said the Hessian with a smile, gazing upon the manly form before him.

"Yes! but now we will continue the discussion your entrance interrupted, Lord Lionel."

"Shall I withdraw, general?"

"Oh, no, by no means, for I wish your young, and justly poised head to give me some advice regarding a certain matter."

"Command me, Lord Howe."

"Well, I received a letter this morning from some unknown source informing me that an attempt would soon be made to rescue from prison the rebel spy, Colonel Vancourt—"

"You believe him a spy then, my lord?"

"Assuredly. As such he is condemned to die."

"Yet he came into the lines to see his wife and child."

"Ostensibly, yes, Lord Lionel; but I believe

under a cover of affection for family was a love of country, and he must die."

"His wife is loyal, and—"

"And his daughter is an arch little rebel. Ah, the trouble these beautiful American women do give us! I declare I wish every officer and man of my army was married, and had half a dozen children," returned Lord Howe, half in good humor, half-impatiently; but, after a moment he continued:

"He shall be hung as a spy, and although I place little faith in an anonymous communication, yet I will take the precaution to put this rebel beyond the rescue of his friends."

"As how, general?"

"That I have not decided upon."

"Put de rebel on de ship in your harbor, my lord general," said the Hessian officer.

"A good suggestion, Knyphausen, and one I will follow. Two heads are better than one—if one is a Dutch cheese," answered Lord Howe, remarking the last, however, in a low tone.

"Vat ish you say, general?"

"I say, General Knyphausen, that I will follow your advice, and to-night will send the prisoner, under a strong guard, down to the ship-of-the-line, *Terror*, which lies at anchor in the Narrows; and now, Lord Lionel, I would speak to you upon another matter."

"I am all attention, Lord Howe."

"Well, this morning the officer of the guard came to see me, and reports that the grenadier at the guard-house challenged a man last night, who sprung upon him, boldly wrenched his musket from his grasp, and darted away toward East river, and being followed, he was seen to be captured by another sentinel, a dragoon, whom he cut down after a sharp encounter with swords."

"A bold fellow."

"Yes, and the worst of it is, he made good his escape, for upon arriving at the spot, the dragoon was found to be dead but nowhere could be discovered a trace of his assassin."

"You mean the man who slew him in fair combat, general?"

"I mean the assassin, for whoever it was he was a traitor to England; but you seem always disposed to say a good word for these rebels, Lord Lionel."

"I am always disposed to defend a brave man, be he rebel or royalist, Lord Howe, and your own account proves this man to have had pluck of an uncommon order," coolly answered Lionel.

"Indeed he has, and there is no more daring, dashing fellow in any army."

"You know him, then?"

"If this glove does not lie, the man was Glen Tarleton, the Hussar Captain."

"Ha! let me see this glove;" and Lionel took hold of a gauntlet glove, with the flag of the Americans delicately wrought in silk thereon, and beneath it were the initials, also worked, "G. T.," while a silver crescent holding a gold star, was just above the silken colors of the infant Republic.

"These are the initials of the Hussar Captain, general."

"Yes, and the crescent and shield is the crest of his family. There is no doubt in my mind

but that it was Glen Tarleton, and I would give my title almost to catch him; but he has escaped me, and, doubtless, ere this, is once more in his rebel camp, laughing at the scare he gave my troopers. Ha! yonder goes a man I would see. Hol the guard!" cried Lord Howe, as he discovered from his window, the tall and muscular form of our sable friend, Rebel, quietly strolling by in the direction of the Battery.

"Lieutenant, send a soldier to bring yonder giant negro here."

"Yes, my lord," and the soldier disappeared to obey the order of his chief.

CHAPTER VIII.

A BOLD GAME.

IN a few moments the soldier returned, accompanied by Rebel, who looked as innocent and cool as though he had not passed the night in a manner, which, if known to the English commander, would have cost him his life.

With a low bow, but with his keen eyes glancing quickly around him, Rebel entered the august presence, and stood awaiting for the English general to accost him.

"You are the confidential servant of the Hermit of Hell-gate, I believe?" said Lord Howe, interrogatively.

"Yes, massa, I'se his confimiden shall friend and servant," answered Rebel.

"The Hermit says you are as brave as a lion, and can be trusted."

"Yes, massa, t'ankee."

"What is your name, my man?"

"Royal, sar."

"Royal is a loyal name; but I suppose you answer to the cognomen of—"

"De what, massa?"

"The cognomen, that is the name, of *Rebel*, when you are spying in the rebel lines?"

"Yes, massa, I have two names to suit do 'casion."

"So I thought. Well, I wish to see your master, the Hermit, and I order you at once to seek him, and say Lord Howe desires to have him come to his head-quarters."

"Yes, massa."

"Now be off, my man, and here is a keepsake for you," and the English general placed in the brawny hand of the negro a gold-piece, and again bowing his thanks, Rebel departed on his errand, and at the same time Lord Lionel arose to take his leave.

"What, so soon, my young friend?"

"Yes, my lord; I must make a call this morning."

"Upon that rebel beauty, Miss Tarleton, eh?"

"Yes, I shall drop in during the day."

"Well, do me a favor. Find out, if you can, for woman's wit is sharp, if she knew aught of her brother's being in the city."

"She would hardly make me her *confidant* general, knowing my intimacy with you."

"True; but do your best, for though I have detectives watching the house, I do not expect in that way to discover any thing."

"I will do all I can, my lord—good-morning;" and Lionel Livingstone left the mansion and walked leisurely along Broadway, until he came to Ann street, and into this he turned, and after a few steps stopped before a handsome brick

house, the door of which he opened with a private key and entered.

Lord Howe, in the meantime, paced to and fro the room, lost in thought, for the Hessian had departed shortly after Lord Lionel.

For an hour or more the English noble paced the room in deep thought, and then the door opened quietly and the Hermit of Hell-gate entered, his venerable and noble face calm and unmoved, and with no trace upon his countenance of excitement and uneasiness.

"Ha, my worthy friend, I have been thinking of you, for not long since I bade your servant go seek you."

"I am here, Lord Howe," said the Hermit, in calm, unmoved tones.

"Yes, and right glad am I to see you; be seated."

The Hermit took a chair near the table, and the general-in-chief threw himself upon a sofa, and said:

"And now about that expedition in the schooner; do you know the orderly by whom I sent the order has not returned?"

"Strange, for the schooner lies anchored in the stream with a naval crew on board, for I observed her as I crossed the river."

"Indeed! Then the fellow delivered his letter and has since deserted, for nothing can be found out about him."

"Perhaps he may be upon the schooner, my lord."

"No, Hermit; he has deserted, for I find he was a Yankee, and I liked not his looks; but in my haste to catch the Vulture ere she sailed, I was forced to send him. Yet, as he has delivered promptly the letter, and the lieutenant and crew are aboard the schooner, it is all right."

"Yes, my lord, an officer in full naval uniform was pacing her deck as I passed under her stern."

"Then all is right. Now I have reason to believe that an attempt will be made to-night to rescue that daring rebel, Colonel Mercer Vancourt, and to guard against it, I wish you to go, after dark, to the guard-house, and get a file of men and proceed with them to the cottage where the prisoner is confined, take him out and carry him on board the schooner, which will immediately get under way and run down to the Narrows where the Terror is at anchor, and bid her commander keep Colonel Vancourt on board until further orders from me."

"I will do as you wish, my lord; but can I offer a suggestion?"

"Certainly."

"Would it not be as well to at the same time carry out the plan I had intended putting the schooner to?"

"How mean you?"

"We can deliver the prisoner on board the Terror, and then, passing through the Narrows, head across the lower bay for Amboy, and if we have a fair wind, arrive there under cover of the night and march inland to the residence of Colonel Loyd, whom I can at once inform of our coming, by sending a trusty messenger, so that he can have several of the rebel commanders present for us to seize."

"The very thing! Hermit, you should be a commander," said Lord Howe, delighted at the prospect of soon getting possession, by a bold move, of some American general; for the Hermit had planned that an expedition should be sent to the residence of a Colonel Loyd, living near Amboy, and where it was known the patriot commanders often assembled.

Fully satisfied of the Hermit's good faith and devotion to the king, Lord Howe had willingly consented to the proposition, and therefore his order to the commander of the Vulture, an order which the reader had seen did not turn out satisfactory for the English general.

"And, another suggestion I would make, my lord."

"You can speak out, Hermit, for you are full of wisdom."

"Thanks, my lord. What I would say is, that as I am only a spy, an old hermit, the soldiers and seamen would rather have an officer to lead—"

"There is the lieutenant of the Vulture."

"True, but should accident befall him, and should he have, by any chance, to remain on board the schooner, the men would need an officer to lead—"

"You are right, Hermit. Let me see, whom can I send?" and Lord Howe leaned his head thoughtfully upon his hand.

"Colonel Templeton—"

"The very man, and he will be delighted to anticipate the raid he is planning to make with his dragoons, by a brilliant little exploit of this kind. You will need, I suppose, about a dozen troopers. I will send for Templeton, give him his orders, and you can visit the barracks at dark, march out the men and go for the prisoner and take him aboard the schooner, where the colonel can join you by nine o'clock, when you can get under way."

"Yes, my lord. Will you now give me the necessary written orders?" said the Hermit, rising.

"Certainly. Here, Cuyler, I need you," cried the general, calling to his adjutant-general, who was in an adjoining room, and who at once joined his chief.

"Write out an order to detail a sergeant and twelve dragoons from Templeton's regiment, to be placed under command of the Hermit of Hell-gate. There; now write word to the officer in charge of the prisoner, Mercer Vancourt, to deliver him into the hands of the Hermit. There, now, affix the seal, and I'll sign them," and in five minutes after, the Hermit of Hell-gate left head-quarters armed with the papers that he had boldly plotted and planned to get possession of, and in which he had succeeded most satisfactorily.

CHAPTER IX.

A FRIEND IN DISGUISE.

SOME three hours after Lord Lionel Livingstone had entered his rooms on Ann street, he again came forth, and walked with rapid step toward the mansion of the Tarletons.

Cesar answered the knock, and carried his card in to Salome, who in anxiety was waiting to hear some word from her brother.

Still pale, but if any thing more beautiful

with the look of sadness that rested upon her face, Salome arose to meet her visitor, for she was alone, as her mother had returned with Lucille to see Mrs. Vancourt and endeavor to cheer her in her distress.

"Lord Lionel, indeed, I am happy to see you; pray be seated."

"I thank you, Miss Tarleton; and not to keep you in suspense let me at once say that your brother escaped capture last night, although his presence is known to Lord Howe," and in a few words the young Englishman acquainted Salome with the circumstances of Glen's meeting with the grenadier and dragoon, and the finding of his glove.

"Yes, the glove betrayed him, for it was one worked by Lucille. Have you any idea where my brother now is, Lord Lionel?"

"Doubtless, in some secure retreat within the British lines, awaiting the coming of night to attempt the release of his friend, Colonel Vancourt."

"God grant he may succeed, but terrible danger is before him."

"With you, lady, I hope Colonel Vancourt may escape, and really I believe that your brother will accomplish his release, however hazardous may be the attempt."

"Lord Lionel, you are a true friend, and doubly so, to aid me and mine, when your interests and feelings are thoroughly English," said Salome with earnestness.

"Miss Tarleton, to none other than yourself would I say that I am *not* thoroughly English; no, I am a true sympathizer with the American people in their resistance to what I feel is the unjust tyranny of the mother country."

"True, I am a titled British subject, and am believed to be loyal to the king, yet in my heart I feel for the Continentals, and all in my power will I aid them, and to do so, must still maintain my allegiance to the crown openly."

"Oh, Lord Lionel, you have no idea what joy your words give me!" exclaimed Salome, and then, as if conscious she had shown too deep feeling for the gentleman, she stopped, her face became crimson, and her beautiful eyes sought the floor in confusion.

"Lady, could I believe act of mine would give you joy, could I believe that for me your heart would throb with love, gladly would I yield right and title as a Briton to gain a smile, a look, a word from you in praise of my action."

Salome was silent, and Lord Lionel continued, speaking in a voice low and thrilling:

"Yes, Salome; to win and wear you, Salome, will be far greater honor, far greater joy, than all the praise of a king, or the honor of my people."

"Salome, I love you, and I would ask you now if there is within your bosom one kindred throb of feeling for me?"

The nobleman ceased speaking, and stood erect, his arms folded upon his broad, manly chest, his earnest face bowed down, and his eyes drinking in every expression that flitted, bird-like, across her lovely countenance.

A moment's silence followed, and then raising her eyes to the man before her, in a firm voice, Salome answered:

"Lord Lionel, I am honored by your love for

me, a simple American girl, and now that you have confessed that you are not an enemy, at heart, to my poor bleeding country and her noble defenders, I will willingly answer that you are not indifferent to me; far from it; that I have loved you from the first, admired your many noble qualities, and longed to have you become a true American.

"Yes, Lionel, I love you, and though I would never have confessed it to an enemy to the soil of America, I now frankly say I am willing to trust my life, my happiness, to your keeping."

"Salome, my beautiful darling, bless you for these words, and hear me now promise you that, though a mystery hangs over my life and actions, perhaps, to you, ere very long, all shall be clearer than noonday; come, rest your head here upon my breast, for never shall it throb with other love than that I feel for you."

With a glad cry of joy Salome Tarleton sprung forward and was enfolded to the broad bosom of the English lover.

Just as Lord Lionel pressed a fond kiss upon the polished brow of the maiden, Lucille Vancourt bounded suddenly and unannounced into the library, and her quick eye at a glance taking in the true position, she exclaimed in a mischievous tone:

"Well, Salome, are you paying Lord Lionel for his valuable services in Continental exchanges?"

"Be still, you witch; I was just talking with Lord Lionel about—"

"Talking! well, you must both be very deaf to have to get so close together to hear each other's words."

"Miss Vancourt has the advantage, for she pelted us from an ambush, as we are unable to get a shot at her in return," said Lord Lionel, politely, though evidently embarrassed at the raillery of the pretty maiden.

"Glen should be here, for doubtless he could return fire for fire with Lucille," answered Salome, who had, in a most innocent manner, suddenly placed quite a space between herself and her lover when she had discovered Lucille.

"I cry quarter; but tell me, Lord Lionel, is there any news of my father, or of—of—Glen?"

"Yes, your darling, daring, rebel lover was in the city last night, playing havoc with Lord Howe's grenadiers and dragoons; he escaped, however, after a personal encounter or two, in which he disarmed one guard and slew another—"

"Killed a man—?"

"Yes, his passage through the city was barred by a bold dragoon, who was cut down by Captain Tarleton after a short combat."

"He escaped then, thank God!"

"I have reason to hope he is safe, and to-night will be enabled to serve your father, for his being in the city is proof that it is his intention to free Colonel Vancourt."

"Noble, noble fellow! God grant he may succeed!" said Lucille, with deep feeling, and then acting with the usual impulsiveness of her warm nature, she stepped forward, and grasping the nobleman's hand, said, fervently and with a spice of mischief in her words and manner as well:

"Lord Lionel, I thank you; you are a noble

man, and I do not wonder that Salome loves you, even if you are an Englishman."

After a few more words of conversation, Lord Lionel took his departure, promising to see the ladies again at no very distant time, and bidding them hope that all would be well with those they loved.

Taking a street that led him into Broadway, he turned into that thoroughfare and walked rapidly on to Ann street, where he again sought his own residence.

CHAPTER X.

BAGGING HUMAN GAME.

A SHORT while after dark of the day following the day of the interview between Lord Howe and the Hermit of Hell-gate, a man was pacing moodily to and fro in the small room of a cottage, situated upon the banks of East river, at a point about a mile distant from the site whereon now stands the new post-office of New York city.

The cottage was small, but comfortable, having a yard around it, encircled by a white paling fence that inclosed about an acre.

Before the front door was pacing a sentinel, his musket at a shoulder-arms, and in the rear, and upon either side of the cottage, could be seen other soldiers on guard, all most attentive to the duty devolving upon them, which was to keep under their eyes the prisoner confined within the house.

With bold tread, but with head bowed down, the prisoner kept up his never-tiring walk, lost in most gloomy meditations, for well did he know that his life hung by a slender thread, and that a few more suns might rise and find him dead, hung as a spy to satiate the British army.

The prisoner was a man of fine presence, and soldierly in appearance, though perhaps slightly beneath the average in height; dressed in the Continental uniform, he wore a sword-belt from which, however, the sword had been detached, and upon a table in the room lay an officer's hat.

Suddenly voices outside arrested his attention, and in walked the Hermit of Hell-gate, followed by a dozen troopers, wearing the uniform of the well-known regiment commanded by Colonel Templeton, an English officer who had won distinction in his army by his many daring acts.

"You are Mercer Vancourt, an officer in the so-called Continental army, and at present a prisoner, having been captured as a spy within the British lines," said the Hermit in a deep voice, reading from a paper held in his hand.

"I am Colonel Mercer Vancourt, of the Continental army, am no spy, though I was taken within the lines of the British," haughtily answered the patriot.

"We will not discuss the whys and wherefores, sir, for I have not time. You are a rebel to the king, and a spy's fate will be yours. But come, I have an order to take you hence."

"And whither would you take me?"

"It matters not. Put on your cloak and hat, and come."

A moment Colonel Vancourt hesitated. His eyes vividly flashed around him, as if with

some sudden determination, but conquering the thought, whatever it might have been, he quietly obeyed the order of the Hermit, and placing himself between two of the dragoons, walked proudly from the house, but not, however, until he had turned, and with the courtly manner of a true gentleman, thanked the woman in whose cottage he had been a prisoner for more than a week, for her kindness to him.

"Bless you, sir, I would that I could have done more for you; but the guards were too strict to let me even give you a decent meal," answered the good woman.

"Hold your tongue, wench! Sergeant, dismiss the guards who were on duty over this prisoner. Forward, march!" and so saying, the Hermit moved off at a rapid walk, followed by the squad of dragoons, with Colonel Vancourt marching between them.

A walk of ten minutes brought them to a pier upon the bank of the East river, off which was lying a graceful schooner, her sails set, and held by only her stream anchor.

"Ho, the schooner!" suddenly hailed the Hermit.

"Ay, ay!" came the answer.

"Send the boat ashore."

"Ay, ay, sir!" and in a few minutes more a six-oared cutter touched the pier.

"Sergeant, I will go aboard with the prisoner and six of your men, and send the boat back for yourself and the others."

"All right, Mr. Hermit; whatever you say I'll do," replied the sergeant, with a military salute.

In a few moments the cutter had received her load, and started for the schooner.

"Lieutenant, I have brought a prisoner by the orders of General Lord Howe, and it is urgent that he be confined below decks and closely ironed," said the Hermit, as he sprung upon the schooner.

"His lordship's orders shall be obeyed, sir; let your men go below with him—wait, I will go with them—come this way with your prisoner," said the lieutenant, in whom, though dressed in the uniform of a British naval officer, is recognizable Glen Tarleton.

Without a word the dragoons descended to the dimly-lighted cabin, when suddenly the doorway closed behind them, a bright light flashed up shedding a blaze around, and displayed two dozen seamen, with bayonets at a present, ranged round the walls.

"Men, you are my prisoners! Move, or cry out above a whisper, and, so help me God! *you die!*" and Glen Tarleton's voice was low and stern.

In dismay the dragoons glanced upon the array of armed men around them, then upon each other, and again toward the Hermit, upon whose face rested a look of bewilderment equal to their own; but, judging that they expected him to speak, he said, boldly, turning upon Glen Tarleton with well assumed indignation and anger:

"What treachery is this, sir?"

"Silence!" and the pistol in Glen's hand was leveled upon the Hermit, as he continued: "Do you not heed my words? Here, men, advance and iron these men! After which gag each one

so he can not cry out, and confine them in the starboard state-room."

With a look of strange wonderment upon his face, Colonel Vancourt had stood gazing around him, a silent spectator of the remarkable scene; but as the dragoons and Hermit were marched away, he turned suddenly and grasped the hand of his friend, whom he had instantly recognized, in spite of the position and disguise in which he found him.

"No words now, colonel, for we have to act, as there are others that will soon be aboard. Here, take a seat on yonder divan, and watch proceedings," said Glen, hurriedly, as he turned and ascended to the deck.

In a few minutes the cutter came alongside with the second boat-load of the sergeant and the remaining half-dozen troopers, and meeting them at the gangway, Glen Tarleton said, abruptly:

"Sergeant, the prisoner and your men are below. Go into the cabin with your men, and remain there with them until we get under way, for I want no land-lubbers on my deck."

"All right, your honor; men, follow me," said the sergeant, politely touching his hat, and the next moment they had all descended into the cabin, whither Glen Tarleton had closely followed them, the door closing as before, behind his back.

"Turn on the lights!" and in obedience, the English sergeant and his men beheld the same strange scene that had so startled their comrades, while, stepping forward, Glen remarked:

"You see you are in a trap, men, so quietly submit, or I'll use means to make you."

The dragoons looked around them, and the sergeant, a true and brave soldier, cried suddenly, as he sprung upon the young officer:

"Never!"

"Then die!" and like lightning the keen sword of Glen Tarleton circled around and descended upon the head of the brave man, who, falling on his knees, half drew his sabre, then fell dead upon his face.

"Now will you submit, men?" sternly said the Hussar Captain, glancing around him threateningly upon the troopers.

Apparently awed by the fate of their officer, they sullenly submitted, and Glen ordered them to be ironed and gagged as their comrades had been; remarking, quietly:

"I am sorry to have had to take the life of your sergeant but we are playing at too deep and dangerous a game to be trifled with. Here, men, take the body of this soldier forward, that he may be given burial when we land."

Hardly had the disguised rangers removed the last squad of dragoons to the port state-room, and taken the body of the sergeant into the steerage, when the dark face of Rebel peered in from the deck, and he hastily whispered:

"De boat is comin' aboard, captain, wid de colonel, sar."

"All right, Rebel, keep your ebony countenance out of sight," and so saying, Glen Tarleton ascended to the deck and met Colonel Templeton, who, with a light bound, sprung aboard, remarking to some one who sat in the stern-sheets of the boat that brought him out to the schooner:

"Row back now, Morgan, and tell the general we are ready to start immediately."

"I will, colonel; success to you," answered the officer, and he gave orders to the crew to give way for the shore.

"Colonel Templeton, I believe."

"Yes, sir; I address—"

"The officer who is to command the schooner, sir; did Lord Howe send any further orders?"

"None, but what I can make known to you as we run out. Is all in readiness, sir?"

"Yes, colonel; the prisoner and your men are below, where I ordered them, as I wished to have them out of the way until we got up anchor. Will you enter the cabin?"

"Not now; for I would see you get under way."

"All right, sir; lively there with that anchor, for you must be off now," and in a few moments, the sails filled, and, taking the helm himself, Glen headed the schooner down the harbor, the English colonel standing by his side and watching with interest the flight of the swift vessel through the waters.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HERMIT'S MISSION.

SWIFTLY the beautiful and fleet schooner flew on down the harbor, passing the Battery with its frowning tiers of guns, running close under the stern of some huge man-of-war, whose officers, as they glanced upon the pretty craft flying by, little suspected the daring game then being played by the bold and quiet man who stood at the helm of the craft that was defying the lion in his very den.

"You have a fleet vessel, sir," said Colonel Templeton, admiringly, as he watched the graceful movements of the schooner, which, with fore, mainsail, and jib set, was rapidly rushing along.

"Yes, colonel, and one which will soon place you in the hands of General Washington," answered Glen Tarleton, as he released the helm to Tony Wood, who stood by his side.

"What mean you, sir? You seem inclined to be facetious!" answered Colonel Templeton.

"No, my gallant Colonel Templeton; I am inclined to be terribly in earnest. In a word, sir, you are my prisoner!"

"What! do I hear aright?"

"You do, colonel. I am Glen Tarleton—"

"What!"

"The Hussar Rangers' captain."

"Ho! to the rescue! On deck here, my men, for there is treachery!" and the words of the English officer rung out clear over the water.

"Back! Colonel Templeton! Back, I say, for you are in my power, and all of your men are prisoners below."

With a cry of fury the Englishman sprung forward with drawn weapon, while stepping back, Glen said, quietly, as he drew his sword:

"If you really wish a little sword exercise, my dear colonel, I am at your service."

The two blades crossed with an angry clash, and in a second more a perfect circle of fire seemed revolving between the English and American officers, as they fought together, the one

furiously and determined to take his adversary's life, the other, with coolness and a desire to disarm his foe, for he acted only on the defensive.

Both were superb swordsmen, and very nearly equally matched, although fighting wholly on the defensive as was Glen, he gave his foe the advantage.

The noise of the combat brought all the schooner's crew to look on, and perfectly confident in their captain's skill and courage, the Ranger Hussars stood gazing silently on, when a deep voice said, sternly:

"This is madness, Tarleton. Would you risk your valuable life merely for a bout with this Englishman?" and Colonel Vancourt pushed his way through the crowd.

"There is no risk, sir. See!" and as Glen spoke, he struck the sword of Colonel Templeton from his grasp.

Infuriated at being betrayed, and rendered more so by being disarmed, the Englishman quickly drew from his belt a pistol and leveled it at the head of Glen Tarleton, who, seeing the act, sprung forward, seized the weapon ere it could be discharged, tore it from the grasp of the colonel, and threw it into the sea, saying:

"Do not cause me to deal severely with you, sir, for I would respect your rank."

"It is true then, myself and men are betrayed?"

"It is true that you and your men are my prisoners, colonel, and, to relieve your mind, I will at once make known to you that this schooner was intended to be manned by a crew from the sloop-of-war, Vulture, and then was to carry Colonel Vancourt on board the Terror, whose dark outlines you see miles below us there; but, capturing the bearer of the order to the captain of the Vulture, I acted upon it, manned the vessel with my own men, and having learned through a secret source that you and your brave troopers were also coming on board to go on a little expedition, I concluded to capture you, which, I am sorry to say, was not done without the loss of your brave sergeant."

"Sergeant Hole escaped, then?" eagerly said the officer.

"No, sir, you mistake my meaning; he resisted, and I was compelled to kill him."

"Murderer!"

"Be sparing with your epithets, Colonel Templeton, and as we now are drawing near to the Terror, I must beg you to descend into the cabin."

The Englishman glanced attentively into the stern and determined face of the man before him, and as if reading there that he would not be trifled with, he said:

"I will go into the cabin, and if you will not put me in irons, I give my *parole* not to escape or in any way betray you."

"I accept your *parole*, sir, and trusting in your honor, give you permission to remain on deck," answered Glen, frankly, for he disliked to use harsh measures with an enemy, even though he had shown himself as bitter a one as was Colonel Templeton.

"I thank you, Captain Tarleton. Pardon, please, the epithet I applied to you a moment since in anger."

"With pleasure, sir."

"And permit me to say that the courage and ability of the Hussar Captain have not been exaggerated; but, can I ask what has become of an old man that was to have been on board?"

"You refer to the Hermit of Hell-gate, I suppose?"

"Yes; he is not a soldier, and—"

"And as such you think I have no right to hold him; but you know the old adage regarding a man being caught in bad company."

"Captain Tarleton, as a brother soldier I am going to ask a favor of you, even though it may seem strange for me to do so."

"Speak out, Colonel Templeton."

"I will, sir; it is most urgent that my capture should be made known to Lord Howe, and for a matter of only personal, not public or military interest, and I promise if you will allow the old man to return and make known the circumstance, I will esteem it a lasting favor."

Glen was silent a moment, and then said:

"Colonel Templeton, I have no desire to be disagreeable; but you hold in your power, as a prisoner, a lieutenant of my command; he was captured in a skirmish some weeks since, and his name is Henry Loyd."

"Yes, I know him; he is now confined in the Battery."

"Yes, sir, for had he not been, ere this there would have been an attempt made to rescue him; but, colonel, give me your word he shall be set free, and I will put the Hermit in one of the schooner's boats and let him return at once to New York, provided he will give his parole of honor not to betray this schooner to be other than she seems to Lord Howe."

"Captain Tarleton, I accept your conditions. Release the Hermit, let me speak with him, and I will give my pledge that Lord Howe will give your lieutenant in exchange for him."

"Very well, colonel. Colonel Vancourt, will you allow me to speak with you a moment?"

The patriot colonel stepped one side quickly, and Glen said to him:

"While I go below with this Englishman, call up the negro, Rebel, from the steerage and let him hide away in the schooner's starboard cutter, with sails and oars in it; he can stow himself out of sight beneath the sail; please see to this while I detain the colonel below."

"I will, Glen, and I will send a word to Lucille by him, for I see he is your friend."

"He is, trust him fully. Colonel Templeton, we will now draw up those papers, sir," and so saying Glen led the way into the cabin.

Hardly had they disappeared when Rebel was called to the deck, and in an instant he had stretched himself out at full length in the boat, and the sail and mast laid upon him so as to conceal his form. The cutter was then lowered into the water and was towed alongside, until the reappearance of the English officer and Glen upon the deck, accompanied by the Hermit of Hell-gate.

"You understand, Sir Hermit; you are to speak to no one but Lord Howe, of what has been done on board the schooner to-night."

"I understand, sir, you have my word; now, Colonel Templeton, have I all your orders?" answered the Hermit.

"You have; bid Lord Howe to be particular

about the release of the rebel lieutenant, for I have pledged my word. Good-by," and the English officer extended his hand.

"Good-by, Captain Tarleton; you are a brave man, sir, and I thank you for my liberty," and as the Hermit spoke he held forth his hand to the young Hussar Captain, who left in his palm, unseen by the Englishman, a small envelope, containing a few lines he had lastly scribbled to his sister and Lucille.

"Come, jump in, my man, for soon we will be hailed by the frigate," cried Glen, and springing into the cutter towing alongside, the painter was cast loose, and the next moment the small boat was dancing in the schooner's wake, and ere many minutes was out of sight astern, for the Hermit quickly stepped his small mast and spread his sail to the breeze.

Steadily standing on, the schooner soon approached the dark hull of the frigate-of-war, which was anchored right in the Narrows, and standing like a formidable sentinel over New York harbor.

Soon a gun flashed from her bows, and a shot flew toward the schooner, and passed to the windward.

"That is for us to come to, Tony; but if we do, she'll send a boat aboard. Here, give me that lantern," and seizing the light, Glen turned it thrice around his head in a fiery circle.

"Now lower away on the foresail and flying jib; there, helmsman, luff her up so as to point for the frigate," and as if judging by the movements of the schooner, that she was not attempting to run the gantlet and put to sea, no other gun was fired from the Terror, but a hoarse voice hailed:

"Ahoy! what schooner is that?"

"Lord Howe's yacht. I have word for the commander of the Terror; shall I come aboard?" answered Glen Tarleton, in an even, firm voice.

"Ay, ay, sir; luff up and lay aback, while you come aboard," came an order in the same hoarse voice.

"Ay, ay, sir!" cried the Hussar Captain, in reply, and then he continued in a lower tone: "Mr. Wood, I am going on board the frigate, and if anything causes you to think I am discovered, run the schooner ashore and make your escape with the crew. Lower away the gig there, men, and five of you jump in to row me aboard."

The order was quickly obeyed, and then, turning to the English officer, Captain Tarleton continued:

"You see I am trusting to your honor, colonel, and risking much."

"Yes; but why, can I ask, are you so reckless of your life? You are taking a most dangerous step, Captain Tarleton."

"I am not acting with foolhardiness, Colonel Templeton, although you may think so, but have a motive in boarding the Terror, which I cannot explain to you."

"It is reckless, sir."

"I know it. But, if successful, the end will be worth the risk. *Au revoir.*"

Thus speaking, and waving his hand in adieu, Glen Tarleton sprung into his gig, the oarsmen gave way, and in a few moments more he was alongside the Terror.

CHAPTER XII.

A DARING RUSE.

WITH a pale, determined face, the Hussar Captain ascended to the frigate's deck, and asked the officer who received him to conduct him to the commander.

"He bade me bring you to him; please follow me, sir," said the lieutenant, and the next moment Glen was ushered into the cabin of the *Terror*, and was face to face with her commander, a young and effeminate-looking nobleman, but whose courage was undisputed, and had done as much to elevate him to such a responsible position as had his title, for the youthful Earl of Westmoreland was of an ancient and honorable race, in spite of his almost womanly face and slight form.

"You come with orders from his lordship, General Howe? Be seated, sir," said the earl, as he took from his lips a fragrant cigar, and, without arising from his reclining position upon a soft divan, waved his visitor to a seat.

"I do, sir. His lordship bade me say to you that he had armed and equipped his own yacht for a cruise down toward Amboy, but the guns he had selected not being suitable, he begged that you would loan him an eighteen-pounder pivot-gun, and four twelves, until the return of the schooner."

"This is a strange request, but I suppose I can oblige him. Mr. Grayson, can we spare a long eighteen and four twelves for a few days, to this schooner, which is bound on a shallow water cruise?" and the earl turned to a gray-bearded lieutenant, who had just entered.

"Yes, sir; when does he wish them?"

"I can bring my vessel alongside, and we can soon lower them upon her decks."

"All right, captain—I don't know what your name is. Mr. Grayson will see that it is done. Take a glass of brandy, sir, and help yourself to a cigar; and, by the way, ask his lordship, General Howe, if he cannot get an excuse for me to bring the *Terror* up to the city soon, as I've several flirtations with those pretty American belles I wish to complete. You need not speak to the general about the women—only say I would like to come up."

"I will, sir. Permit me to drink your very good health," and raising the glass of brandy, Glen Tarleton drank it down, thanked the earl for his kindness, lit his cigar, and walked from the cabin.

"Mr. Grayson, I will go aboard my vessel and bring her alongside, sir, if, in the mean time, you will get all in readiness to lower the guns to her decks," and so saying the Hussar Captain went over the side into his boat, which at once pulled away to the schooner.

"Colonel Templeton, I will have to ask you to confine yourself to one of the state-rooms for the next hour. I am sorry, but necessity compels it, sir," said Glen, as he returned to his vessel.

The Englishman bowed haughtily and retired to the schooner's cabin.

"Now, Colonel Vancourt, I have at last an opportunity to congratulate you, sir, upon your escape," and the Hussar Captain held forth his hand to the man whom he had saved, with the aid of the *Hermit*, from almost certain death.

"To you, my brave and noble friend, I owe much; but this is no time for thanks; let me act," said the patriot officer.

"I would be glad to have you aid me, sir, but first change this dress. Mr. Wood, go below with Colonel Vancourt, and rig him out in a sailor suit, and both of you hasten on deck."

Glen Tarleton then took the helm of his little vessel, and, while his men eagerly and confidently watched his every movement, he came up gracefully under the lee of the immense frigate and was soon lashed firmly alongside.

More than an hour passed, and aided by the crew of the *Terror*, the five guns were lowered upon the deck of the *Wind*, and placed securely at the ports and on the forecastle, after which, with reiterated thanks, the Hussar Captain gave the order to cast off, and her sails catching the wind, the schooner drew away from the frigate, and pointed her sharp nose out of the Narrows.

"Thank God we're free; now I breathe again," said Glen, as the immense hull of the frigate that had been so daringly boarded grew indistinct in the distance.

"Captain Tarleton, you have this night won an imperishable name," said Colonel Vancourt, grasping the hand of his young friend, while one of the *Rangers* remarked:

"Yes, captain, if we were not afraid the frigate could bring us to, we would hollow ourselves hoarse with joy."

"Yes, we have been most fortunate; but now, colonel, will you go down and tell Colonel Templeton he can come on deck, and also bid the guards ungag the prisoners and bring them up to get some fresh air, for after our success, we can afford to be generous."

In a short time the English officer and his troopers came up from the cabin, and casting anxious looks around them, all hope of release faded from their minds, as they saw the swift schooner leaving the *Terror* far astern, and heading up the lower bay, where they knew, ere very long, she would anchor and send them as prisoners to the head-quarters of Washington's army.

After a rapid run of a few hours the schooner ran into an inlet not far from Amboy, where Glen Tarleton landed with his prisoners and the greater part of his crew, leaving only a few men on board the *Wind* to act as guard, until he could report to General Washington that he had a small but fleet and well-armed craft to be added to the Continental army.

Making slow marches, it was not until the next day that the head-quarters of the general-in-chief was reached, and the prisoners delivered up, and having made known his story in a few modest words, Glen Tarleton at once became the hero of the hour.

"Captain Tarleton, you have done invaluable service to the American cause, sir; not only in the release of Colonel Vancourt from the enemy's hands, but in securing to the States the schooner, which you so daringly armed by the aid of one of the finest frigates in the British navy."

"Also, the capture of Colonel Templeton is a great honor to you, sir, and I am proud to congratulate you upon your daring and devotion to

the American cause of independence," and so speaking, General Washington laid his hands upon each shoulder of the Hussar Captain, and gazed admiringly into his handsome face.

Glen thanked the chieftain for his words of kind praise, and then continued:

"General Washington, I would like to propose to you a plan for the recapture of an American cruiser which, some days ago, was carried into New York as a prize, and now lies off the Battery."

"I have thought of a scheme for taking back that vessel, captain, and had Colonel Vancourt not been a prisoner, would have detailed him for the service; but now, as you desire the honor, you shall have it, especially as I desire to keep the colonel near my person as an *aide*."

"I thank you, sir, for your goodness, and in a very short while I will be prepared to make the attempt to retake the vessel, in connection with one who has rendered me great service heretofore—in fact, to him is my success in this last affair mostly due."

"To whom do you refer, captain, can I ask?"

"To one known as the Hermit of Hell-gate, and who is in your confidence, I believe."

"Assuredly he is, sir; but do you know aught of that strange man, captain?"

"Only that he is called a Hermit, sir, and appears to be a most remarkable personage."

"He is certainly such; but do you know him by no other name than that of Hermit?"

"I do not, sir."

"Well, one of these days you will; now I can not say more, for the mystery that hangs around him he wishes yet awhile to remain a mystery, and it is better that it should."

"When do you return to your command, sir?"

"Immediately; but the men who composed the schooner's crew I will leave here until I come back, for I need them. Tony Wood will be all I care to take with me."

Bidding farewell to General Washington, Glen Tarleton ordered his men to return to the schooner and await his coming, after which he secured horses, and accompanied by Tony set out for the encampment of the Ranger Hussars.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MESSENGER.

WHEN the swiftly gliding schooner had become indistinct in the distance, Rebel quietly raised himself from the bottom of the boat, and taking his seat near his master, held firmly to the sheet rope, while he chuckled gleefully over the success of their daring enterprise.

"I guesses the Britishers will be fightin' mad, boss, when dey know what's been done," said the negro.

"Ay, ay, Rebel, it will create a stir among them, and win for Glen Tarleton a great reputation for daring and skill."

"Yes, massa, he mighty nice young gemman; is you going to de cave now?"

"No, we will reach the city in half an hour and I will at once seek an interview with Lord Howe," and in the time mentioned the little boat glided quietly up to the pier at the foot of Broadway, and bidding the negro take the

cutter around to his usual landing-place upon the East river and await his coming, the Hermit sprung ashore and rapidly walked in the direction of the Kennedy House, where were the quarters of Lord Howe.

"His lordship is at a late dinner, sir; will you wait?" said the sentinel, as the Hermit approached.

"No, I have no time to wait, so send word to Lord Howe the Hermit would see him," and he paced to and fro impatiently, until a liveried servant called to him to follow him.

Entering the brightly-illuminated dining-room, the Hermit discovered the commander-in-chief, seated at a table well-filled with luxuries, and surrounded by half a dozen of the most prominent officers of the British army.

"Well, Sir Hermit, you have early returned; gentlemen, this is my most trusty servitor and spy, one who has done me invaluable service."

The Hermit, of whom all present had heard, bowed haughtily, while the officers returned his salutation in a much more friendly manner.

"Be seated, Hermit, and let me fill a glass of wine for you," said Lord Howe.

"Thanks, my lord, I will remain standing, and I care not for the wine."

"True, I am the bearer of important news, but assuredly it is not the kind that will cause you to rejoice."

"What! has aught gone wrong? Speak out, for all are friends here."

"Your lordship ordered me to convey the prisoner—"

"Has he escaped?"

"Patience, my lord, and you will hear all."

"You ordered me to convey the prisoner, Colonel Vancourt—"

"Mister Vancourt, Hermit," interrupted General Knyphausen.

"My lord, I will come again and tell you my news when I will not be subjected to interruption," and bowing haughtily the Hermit turned to leave the room, when Lord Howe called out to him:

"Hold, Sir Hermit, and make known what you have to say, for you shall not be interrupted again."

The Hermit of Hell-gate glanced his keen eyes over the company, and resumed:

"You bade me take a sergeant and a dozen troopers from Colonel Templeton's regiment and convey the prisoners on board the schooner, which was lying in East river, with a supposed crew from the Vulture on board."

"I detailed the men, took the prisoner, and marching to the landing hailed the schooner, which immediately sent a small boat ashore for us."

"With the prisoner and six of the troopers, I entered and rowed back to the schooner, where the lieutenant met us and ordered us below into the cabin, which was dimly lighted."

"A moment after it was lit up brilliantly, and standing in the companionway with drawn sword and pistol was the lieutenant, while ranged around the cabin-walls, with muskets at a present, were some thirty seamen."

"We were securely entrapped, and the next instant the troopers and myself were ironed, gagged and confined in one of the state-rooms."

"God have mercy! but this is strange conduct. You then were—but go on," exclaimed Lord Howe, excitedly.

"A few moments more and I heard the boat, containing the sergeant and remaining troopers come aboard, and they likewise were marched below to become prisoners, the sergeant only resisting—"

"Brave fellow, he shall be promoted for this."

"No, your lordship, his resistance cost him his life, for, springing upon the naval lieutenant, he was immediately slain by him."

"My God! this is indeed a most tragic affair. The schooner then put off, I suppose—"

"No, your lordship; the schooner awaited the coming of Colonel Templeton, then slipped her cables, and stood down the harbor, the colonel, in perfect ignorance of what had taken place, standing by the wheel conversing with the young commander of the craft."

"Go on, Hermit, go on."

"There is little more to say, for shortly after, I was conveyed to the deck and Colonel Templeton told me that we were all prisoners to Glen Tarleton, the Hussar Captain."

"What! do I hear aright?"

"Yes, your lordship; Captain Tarleton had taken the man prisoner whom you had sent down to the Vulture, and reading the orders therein stated, took possession of the schooner, manned her with a crew of his own men, and ran round into the East river to effect the escape of Colonel Vancourt, which he accomplished, besides taking some valuable prisoners."

"Gentlemen, did you ever hear of such unparalleled audacity? To be bearded in one's own den, as it were; but, Hermit, how came you here?" asked Lord Howe, suspiciously.

"It seems I was not recognized as other than a civilian, and Colonel Templeton seized upon this to plan my release, which he gained by pledging himself to the immediate exchange for me, of Lieutenant Henry Loyd of the Hussar Rangers. The colonel said you would feel that it was a most urgent affair to know of his capture."

"True, true, I will have to release the rebel lieutenant, for had I not known of the capture of Templeton, it would have been a far more serious matter than it is; but now I can stop the movement of certain troops which he was to lead, and for which every plan had been completed. At what time did you escape?"

"I did not escape, I was released upon the pledge of Colonel Templeton, and Captain Tarleton gave me one of the schooner's boats in which to return to the city."

"Which way did the schooner stand, Hermit?"

"On down the harbor, and when I last descried her, was heading toward the frigate-of-war, Terror."

"The frigate will bring him up, my lord," said one of the generals of division.

"No, sir, no, gentlemen, that rebel Hussar Captain seems to have the devil to aid him, for he is continually doing deeds no other man would dare, and always is certain to get off. No, the frigate will be fooled, as we have been, and ten to one if he does not boldly board her, and

take a glass of wine with the young nobleman who is in command."

After an earnest conversation with his officers, Lord Howe turned to the Hermit, and said:

"Here, Sir Hermit, as I must keep Templeton's pledged word, I wish you to go to the prison with this pass, and take the rebel lieutenant in your boat to the Jersey shore, and there let him shift for himself."

"When can you go?"

"Now, General Howe."

"So much the better," and, writing the pass and release, Lord Howe continued:

"Hermit, I wish you once more for an important mission, and it was a lucky idea in Templeton, poor fellow, to get you free; come to me to-morrow at twelve."

The Hermit then left the head-quarters of the general, and at a step strangely quick, for one seemingly so aged, he wended his way toward the prison, exhibited his papers to the captain in charge, and in ten minutes more was in the street, accompanied by Henry Loyd, a young but gallant officer belonging to the corps of Hussar Rangers, in which he was a second lieutenant.

A walk of twenty minutes brought him to the pier against which lay his own fleet little craft, which had done so much service the night before, and near it was the schooner's cutter, containing Rebel, fast asleep.

The sentinel on duty at the river-bank examined the passes of the Hermit, and permitted him to pass toward the boats.

"Now, Rebel, wake up," and quickly the negro sprung to his feet.

"Lieutenant, I must now leave you in the hands of Rebel, here, who will conduct you to a place of safety, when I will join you ere daylight; Rebel, look out for the comfort of the lieutenant; and remain at the cave until I come."

Henry Loyd then shook hands with the Hermit, and springing into the boat, the negro shoved off from the pier, and taking the tiller, headed up East river in the direction of Hell-gate, while the Hermit, after watching their departure, turned and walked rapidly away across town.

CHAPTER XIV.

A DEEP-LAID SCHEME.

UPON the night of the schooner's escape from the harbor, Salome Tarleton and Lucille sat together in the home of the former, eagerly awaiting the appearance of Lord Lionel, who had promised to come at an early hour, and bring them all the news he could glean of the intended attempt of the release of Colonel Vancourt.

But the hours dragged slowly by until the ivory clock upon the mantle had pealed forth ten, and yet he came not, and in fear and trembling the maidens awaited, for they knew that two persons most dear to them were then exposed to the greatest danger.

Hardly had the ring of the silver-toned clock died away when there came a rap upon the door that caused both of the maidens to start with fear, for nervous and excited, they were constantly dreading evil.

"That must be Lord Lionel, Salome."

"No, Lucille, the knock was too boisterous for him—wait, I will go to the door," and so speaking, Salome Tarleton crossed the hallway and unbarred and opened the front portal.

A muffled form stepped within, which, at first from his size and stature, Salome believed Lord Lionel, and she was about to extend to him a warm greeting, when she discovered a long white beard and flowing locks.

"Well, sir, what would you?" asked the maiden, haughtily.

"I would speak with you, lady, if I could do so privately, and if you are, as I believe, Miss Tarleton."

"I am Miss Tarleton; but why would you request to see me?"

"I bring news, lady, of your brother."

"Oh, joy! Here, follow me into the library," and Salome entered the room, and motioned the stranger to a seat.

"Thank you, lady. Is yonder maid Miss Vancourt?"

"That is my name, sir," answered Lucille.

"Then I have news for both of you—"

"Oh, God! tell me, sir, is it evil tidings you bring?" cried Lucille, with deep earnestness.

"No, lady, it is most joyful news for both of you. Your father, Miss Vancourt, through the daring of Captain Tarleton and others, has escaped."

"Heavenly Father, I thank Thee. Oh, Lucille, what joyful tidings; but, my dear friend, be seated, and tell us all about it, and furthermore, tell us whom we have to thank for this good news."

"Lady, I am known as the Hermit of Hell-gate."

"What, you are that lonely man whom I remember hearing of in my early girlhood? Why, sir, many a romance have I woven in connection with your life, for men say a deep mystery hangs over your past. But this is unkind of me, to perhaps reopen a wound you would have healed, by reference to the past, so please forgive my thoughtlessness," and Salome laid her tiny hand upon the arm of the Hermit, who answered impressively:

"Miss Tarleton, over my life there does hang a deep mystery; but of it I will not speak, but tell you of your brother's escape, and that of Colonel Vancourt, for in a short while stern duty will call me away from here," and in a few minutes the Hermit made known to the maidens all that the reader already knows, regarding the daring rescue of Colonel Vancourt and the escape of the schooner.

Having concluded his recital, he gave to Salome the small note left in his palm by Glen, when he left the schooner, and then, overshadowed by their thanks, bade them farewell, and left the mansion, while the two young girls put on their wraps and hastened over to Mrs. Vancourt's home, where Mrs. Tarleton was passing the evening, and made them acquainted with the particulars they had learned, reserving, however, as the Hermit had requested, the source of their information.

Rapidly the Hermit wended his way from the mansion toward the pier, where his own boat lay in readiness, and raising the sail, he cast loose, and darted away over the waters.

With the same skill and nerve the reader has seen him display on a previous occasion, he passed through the raging waters of Hell-gate, and in a short while ran his boat into the same quiet basin, and in a moment more stood within the cave, which was filled with the fragrant flavor of boiling meats.

"Here massa, lieutenant, just in time," exclaimed Rebel, delightedly, at the sight of the Hermit.

"Yes, just in time, and full hungry enough to do justice to a good meal, which I hope you have ready, Rebel."

"Yes, massa, all ready."

"Good! Lieutenant Loyd, I am glad to see you in my lonely quarters, sir, and trust Rebel has done the honors."

"Indeed he has, for I have greatly enjoyed some of your good brandy here, and was just sharpening my appetite for the tempting dinner, or supper, before me; I am glad you arrived in time," said Henry Loyd, pleasantly.

The Hermit then made his guest acquainted with the fact that, though apparently serving Lord Howe, he was in reality in the service of General Washington, and corroborated his remarks by a full history of the escape of Colonel Vancourt.

"Now, lieutenant, we must seek repose, for both Rebel and myself sorely need it, and doubtless you do, and in the morning we will start for the Jersey shore, after I have had an interview with Lord Howe."

A half-hour more and the three occupants of the cave were fast asleep, and the sun was hours high ere they awoke.

Then, in a short while, they partook of a hearty breakfast, and getting into the Hermit's boat, moved out from the basin, Lieutenant Loyd having thrown a cloak about him to conceal his colonial uniform from curious eyes.

Even in broad daylight, the waters of Hell-gate looked fearfully dangerous in their chaotic dash and whirl, but steadily through the danger the little boat glided, her master calmly holding the helm, and an hour after ran alongside the pier at the foot of the city.

"Drop off from the bank and await my coming, Rebel; hold no conversation with any one," and so saying, the Hermit walked on toward the Kennedy House, and the next moment stood in the presence of Lord Howe.

"Ho, Sir Hermit, you are, as usual, most punctual," exclaimed the English general, upon catching sight of him.

"Yes, my lord, I have come to hear your commands, and also to propose an expedition for the honor of the British army."

"Ha! say you so? Then I'll hear what you have to say, for I only wished to ask you about the time you would again enter the rebel lines?"

"To-day I leave, and as I carry with me the rebel lieutenant, I will gain a good reception."

"But to the point at once—it is my intention to boldly attempt the capture of the Hussar Captain."

"By St. George, do that for me, Hermit, and your fortune is made."

"I will take the following plan, my lord:

"At a point on the Jersey shore, not very far

from Elizabethport, dwells a man whom I believe to be as much an Englishman as an American, for he is a smuggler, and keeping good liquors his place is a favorite resort for both sides when they get in his vicinity. Well, I will take Lieutenant Loyd to this man's house, and send at once for Captain Tarleton, to whom I will show my pass from Washington, and pretending to be fooling you, my lord, will tell him I will enter into an agreement with him to take one of your distinguished generals prisoner."

"Be more explicit, Hermit, for I confess I do not fully understand your meaning."

"Listen, my lord, and I will explain. I will tell him that I will make known to you that a prominent rebel officer is willing to turn traitor for a large pecuniary consideration, and will meet any officer of like rank with himself—one whom your lordship will designate—at this smuggler's den to-morrow night at nine o'clock, and then I will tell Captain Tarleton that he must be there with half a dozen of his Hussars to take prisoner the English general."

"Go on, Hermit," said Lord Howe, deeply interested and with excited face.

"Then, your lordship, you can send some captain or any officer you please, for it is not for me to dictate whom you send, and he can take with him a dozen or more good soldiers, who can follow him to the smuggler's den, and when he is in consultation with Captain Tarleton, his men can surround the house and take the Hussar Captain prisoner."

"Hermit, you are worth your weight in gold; let me see, whom will I send?"

"As it is a boating expedition, it should be a naval officer, and yet I do not know from what ship to detail the men, as the fleet in the harbor may move at any moment, and hence need all her seamen," said Lord Howe, thoughtfully.

"There is the Terror—"

"Ha! have you heard what that cursed schooner did last night?"

"Why, as I live, she boldly boarded the Terror; the Hussar Captain, dressed as a lieutenant in the British navy, daringly sought an interview with her commander, and telling him a cock-and-bull story about being sent from me, got from him the loan of heavy guns sufficient to equip his vessel, after which he departed, as he said, by my orders, on a cruise about Amboy."

"You surprise me, my lord," said the Hermit, struck with admiration at the daring of Glen, from whom, it will be remembered, he parted ere he boarded the Terror.

"It is nevertheless true, Hermit, for Lieutenant Grayson of the Terror was here not two hours ago, and I learned all from him."

"That Hussar Captain is a wonderful man."

"Assuredly he is; but I believe your plan good to take him prisoner, for I learned from a secret source that he was planning a raid with his troops, and doubtless he returned to his encampment as soon as he had run the schooner up to Amboy."

"Doubtless, my lord. Well, sir, have you decided what men to send on this expedition?"

"No, I do not know—"

"Can I suggest that you draw them from the

rebel cruiser captured some time ago? She has two officers and some thirty men aboard of her."

"True, and can easily spare an officer and half her crew. Who will guide the expedition, Hermit?"

"I will send my negro man with the boats, sir; he can be fully trusted."

"All right. Find out what you can about it to-day, and upon your return I will give you the order for the lieutenant commanding the rebel prize, to send an officer and fifteen seamen with you; come to me as soon as you return."

"I will, Lord Howe;" and leaving the mansion the Hermit wended his way to his boat, which he called ashore, and was soon flying across the mouth of the Hudson river, and heading along the Jersey coast toward Elizabethport.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SMUGGLER'S CABIN.

SWIFTLY flew the light boat of the Hermit along the low shores for two hours, or more, and then turned quickly into a small indenture, or bay, which extended back until lost in the overhanging forest.

"There, lieutenant, you can now see the cabin of the smuggler, yonder, under the brow of the hill," and so saying, the Hermit steered the boat to the bank, and the three occupants soon sprung out on *terra firma*.

Rapidly walking to the cabin, a log structure containing but two rooms, they were met at the door by an old man dressed in a style half-farmer, half-fisherman, who, upon seeing the Hermit, greeted him most warmly.

"Well, Saul, I am glad to see you once more; but get up your two nags at once, for I wish Rebel here and the officer to start at once to find Captain Tarleton."

"What's up, Mr. Hermit?"

"I'll tell you after awhile, Saul; now get up your horses," and in obedience the man addressed as Saul soon brought to the cabin door two fair-looking horses, both saddled and bridled.

"Now, Rebel, mount and go to General Washington's head-quarters, and bring back with you Captain Tarleton, if he is there, while you, lieutenant, strike out for your encampment, for the Hussar Captain may have returned, and if so, return with him and some forty men or more."

"And you, Rebel, if you find the captain tell him to bring with him the crew he had on the schooner—nay, I will write him a note," and in a few moments the Hermit had given his full instructions to the lieutenant and Rebel, both of whom then mounted and rode rapidly away, the one taking the road to the north, the other circling the shore in the direction of Amboy.

Shortly after sundown the sound of hoofs was heard by the Hermit, who was seated within the cabin with Saul, and going to the door he discovered the lieutenant had returned, bringing with him the whole corps of Rangers, with Morris Saville, their first lieutenant, at their head.

"The Hussar Captain had not returned to camp, sir; but doubtless, Rebel will find him," said Henry Loyd, and as he spoke, the negro dashed up, his horse covered with foam.

"All right, massa, de young captain is com-

in' wid his sailors, and dey is all just sp'iling for a fight," exclaimed Rebel, as he threw himself from his horse.

A half-hour more and Glen Tarleton, who had been met on the road by Rebel, rode up, accompanied by the crew of the schooner, and warmly was he greeted by his men, all of whom had learned how gallantly he had run the Wind out of the harbor.

"Thanks, my brave Ranger Hussars. Hermit, I would have a word with you," and Glen walked one side, and soon learned the plan for the capture of the prize cruiser.

"I formed this plan from two motives, Captain Tarleton; first, because you had no boats on this shore to undertake the affair with, and I knew this would procure them for you, besides enabling you to take an officer and a few men prisoners, and also leave the cruiser with only half of her crew on board, who, seeing the return of the boats, will not suspect they contain enemies.

"Second, I feel assured that your daring conduct the past day or two, and the escape of Colonel Vancourt, added to the work set forth for to-morrow night, will cause your mother and sister to fall under British displeasure, as also will both Mrs. and Miss Vancourt; hence, if you will write them word to get all in readiness for a hasty departure, explaining fully your reasons, I will see them early in the morning, and after dark will go with them to the river, where a boat shall be in readiness to take them aboard, as soon as I see that you have reached the cruiser; then we can up anchor and away.

"Now what think you of my plan?"

"Sir Hermit, you are indeed a friend, and all shall be as you say; but who will guide the expedition?"

"Rebel, for I must remain in New York."

"True; I will at once write the letters, and let you return, for, doubtless, you are anxious to get off while you have such a good wind.

"Then, I will encamp my men in the woods, and to-morrow night will leave Saville and Loyd to take care of the British officer and his men, while, with the crew I had with me on the schooner, I will seize their boats, and row at once with all haste back to New York and board the cruiser."

"Yes, I see you understand all perfectly, for Lieutenant Saville will have some sixty men after you have taken your crew, with which to take the naval officer and those who come with him in the boats."

A short time more, and, armed with letters from Glen, urgently begging his mother and Salome to leave the city, bringing with them Lucille and Mrs. Vancourt, the Hermit started with Rebel upon his return to New York, arriving at his Hell-gate cavern just at daylight, for the wind had held good during the night.

Hastily selecting from the cavern a few articles of value to himself and Rebel, the Hermit hid them in a boat, and after casting one long, affectionate gaze around upon the walls that had long been his home, he walked through the land opening to the cave, and came out upon a small plot of ground, covered with foliage of dense thickness,

Crossing the grass-plot which was hardly larger than a good-sized room, he came to a willow tree, drooping gracefully over until its sweeping branches trailed upon the ground and rested lightly upon a moss-grown grave.

Stopping beside the humble mound, the hermit let his eyes rest sadly upon it in silence for full a moment, and he said softly to himself:

"No, I could not leave my cavern home without a glance of farewell to this mound: mayhap I may never stand here again, but whate'er be my lot, wheresoever my feet wander, I can never forget this grave beneath the willow, and the one who sleeps herein."

A moment the Hermit stood in silence, and then turning walked slowly back into the cavern, to the next instant enter the boat, wherein Rebel was awaiting him, and once again leave the basin to battle with the waters of Hell-gate on his way to the city.

Running his boat into his usual stopping-place, the Hermit said to the negro, as he sprung ashore:

"Rebel, take the boat round into the Hudson, and await me off Rector street, for we have a dangerous duty to perform as soon as the sun goes down."

"I'll be dere, massa, no fear for me," answered Rebel, and shoved off and stood on down the river, while the Hermit with rapid step turned to seek the Tarleton mansion. Salome was seated at the front window, and seeing him ascend the steps, met him at the door.

"Welcome, sir! Will you come into the library?"

"Yes, lady, I have come upon a mission of importance, and would not only see you, but also your mother and Miss Vancourt."

"Then I will send for my mother and Lucille, for they are both over at the other mansion," and calling Caesar, Salome bade him go over to Mrs. Vancourt's and ask her mother and Miss Lucille to return.

Soon they came, and then the Hermit delivered the letters he held, and urged himself that the request of Glen should be heeded, while he made known to them that the result of their refusal would be a continual persecution as long as the British army held New York.

"You seem to me a strange man, sir, to be in the English service, and yet a friend of my son," said Mrs. Tarleton, eying him sharply.

The Hermit hesitated a moment, glanced softly around the room, and then said in a low tone:

"Madam, in your hands I now trust my life. True, I am in the service of Lord Howe, *I am a spy*; but, though he *believes* me most valuable, Washington *knows* me to be."

"Indeed! You are then serving two masters?"

"Apparently, madam, though in reality I serve but one, for in heart I am an American."

"You place yourself in great danger, sir."

"True, I love danger, and my life I willingly risk to save my poor, bleeding country."

"I am grateful for your confidence, sir; and now that I know more of you, will place my trust in you."

"As for myself, I am ready and willing to leave New York, and retire to an estate I own

in the Virginian colony, away from the ravages of war; but first, I must consult with Mrs. Vancourt, who, though British in sentiment, is rapidly taking sides with the colonists, and if she is willing to depart, we will all be ready by sundown to-night."

After giving a few more instructions, and advising the ladies as to what baggage they could carry, the Hermit took his leave and sought the quarters of General Howe.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HERMIT AT WORK.

WHEN the Hermit arrived at the Kennedy House, he found Lord Howe was absent, but he had not long to wait ere the general returned, and he was ushered into his presence.

"What! back so soon?"

"Yes, Lord Howe, I returned by day this morning, and the result of my trip is most favorable, for I found that the Hussar Captain had seen the schooner, as you supposed, into Amboy, and at once started for his encampment.

"Arriving at the smuggler's I sent for him, handed over his lieutenant, and made known the plan, and he eagerly seized upon it, and was even anxious to mention General Knyphausen as the personage he would like you to send to communicate with this *imaginary* rebel traitor general, for you know the Hessians are not popular with the rebels, my lord.

"He entered eagerly upon the plan and will be there with some half-dozen men, whom the smuggler is to draw away and thus have an opportunity for the seamen to come up and take the Hussar Captain prisoner."

"Hermit, I am delighted with you, and shall at once give you the proper papers to the officer commanding the rebel cruiser, and let him start as soon as it is dark."

"Yes, my lord."

"And then you come and let me know if they get off in safety."

"I will, my lord; now as I have the papers I will say good-morning."

"Good-morning, Hermit; if you were thirty years younger, you would soon become a general," said Lord Howe, as his spy disappeared.

Armed with the necessary orders to the lieutenant commanding the prize, which was a sloop-of-war that had been captured by an English ship of the line some time before, the Hermit went to the rendezvous he had appointed with Rebel, and found him there awaiting him.

"Now for the prize cruiser," said the Hermit, as he took his seat in his boat and the negro shoved off.

Ten minutes more and he was on the deck of the captured American vessel, and entering the cabin he soon laid his plans before the commander.

"I will lead it myself, for gladly would I be known as the captor of the Hussar Captain; yes, Morgan I will leave in charge of this vessel, with ten men, while I carry twenty with me, for I *may* need them," said the lieutenant with enthusiasm, for he was delighted at the project of becoming famous by the capture of Glen Tarleton.

"Yes, you may need them, lieutenant, and it is best to be on the safe side,

"Now I will go, and my negro man, whom you can trust thoroughly, will be your guide."

"I wish you were going, Hermit; but I have heard your man is as brave as a lion, and thoroughly English."

"As brave as a lion, but thoroughly *African*, lieutenant; now, sir, hoping to-night's venture will turn out successful, I will bid you good-by," and calling to Rebel to remain on the vessel, the Hermit took his leave, and soon ran his boat back to the foot of the street from whence he started, for it was near the residence of Mrs. Vancourt, whose grounds sloped down to the water's edge.

The same afternoon, as Salome was busily engaged in getting together certain valuables and necessary clothing to carry with her, for Mrs. Vancourt had been persuaded to go without much trouble, Caesar entered with the card of Lord Lionel Livingstone.

The maiden's face flushed rosy, but smoothing down her rumpled hair and dress, she descended quickly to the library, and extended to her lover a warm greeting.

"I expected you last evening and this morning, Sir Truant, but you disappointed me," she said, in a manner half-provoked.

"I could not come, for I have been absent down the harbor, *ma belle*; but I suppose you have already heard of the terrible stir that devil-may-care brother of yours has created."

"Yes, and indeed I am proud of him, Lionel; only he is too rash."

"Yes, reckless indeed, but yet most cool-headed and sensible with all his daring. But, Salome, my darling, I fear his acts will cause trouble to fall upon his household, for from Lord Howe down, the British soldiery are fearfully enraged."

"Lionel, it is of this very thing I would speak to you, for you must know I now trust you fully; already have we decided upon removing ourselves out of the enemy's hands, and this very night will take our departure."

"And how, *ma belle*?"

"It is all arranged, and we four poor lone women are to embark shortly after nightfall, and my only regret is that you will not be with us, for it pains me greatly to leave you behind."

"You need not do so, Salome, for I will accompany you."

"Oh, joy, joy! Lionel, you have made me extremely happy; now I will tell you all," and Salome made her lover acquainted with their plan, and received from him the answer that he would go with them to the boat.

"But you must give up so much, Lionel, to go with me. Only think, you a titled and wealthy Englishman, you must become an ordinary American citizen soldier, and lose your vast riches."

"Not so thoroughly as you suppose, Salome, for I have a considerable amount of property in America, so invested as to be safe from the ravages and taxes of war; besides, for the title I care but little, and gladly do I resign it to become the possessor of a title far more precious to me."

"And that is—" hesitatingly asked Salome, and although she well knew what he would say, pretending ignorance,

"And that is the simple right of husband to one Salome Tarleton, a rebel beauty, heiress and heroine, whom I love more than life and all the world besides."

Salome's eyes drooped beneath the earnest gaze of her lover, but her heart was glad that she had won Lionel's consent to accompany them in their perilous escape, for well the maiden knew that their departure was attended with considerable danger and great risk.

"The Hermit, I believe, you said, was to conduct the escape, Salome?" inquiringly said the nobleman after a pause.

"Yes, he will come for us and escort us to the river. Have you not faith in him?"

"Perfect, and it is well for you to wholly trust him, for though he blinds Lord Howe and his generals, and causes them to believe he is of great service to them, he certainly aids materially the cause of the colonists."

"I am glad to hear you thus speak of the Hermit, for I felt just the shadow of a doubt regarding him, as was natural, when I knew the deep game he was playing; but yet I feel he has certainly aided Glen, and has the entire confidence of my brother."

"Truly has he; but now I must depart, but will join you to-night at the appointed hour, so *au revoir, ma belle*," and so saying, Lord Lionel strode from the mansion.

CHAPTER XVII.

A DISCOVERY.

SHORTLY after nightfall the Hermit sought the quarters of the English general, and being told by the sentinel to enter, he walked into the usual assembly-room, to find it vacant, and he was about to retrace his steps, when the sound of voices in earnest conversation reached his ear.

Hearing his own name mentioned he paused and listened, and in surprise recognized the well-known voice of Colonel Templeton, who was saying:

"I tell you, Lord Howe, upon Washington's table I saw abundant proof that the Hermit is playing you false."

"It is hard to believe, colonel," answered Lord Howe.

"I know it, for I could hardly credit my senses when it was forced upon me, yet it is true, for not only did the papers I refer to prove it, but I learned it incidentally from outside sources, and this was one of the most cogent reasons for making my escape in the manner in which I did."

"Well, colonel, I expect him here, either to-night or to-morrow morning, and I pledge you he shall swing for his treachery; but you have not related your manner of escape."

"It was in this way, my lord: General Washington sent for me to learn, if possible, if some plan could not be entered upon for the better exchange of prisoners, and I was conducted to his private rooms, and there held with him a long conversation, and to do him justice, rebel chief though he is, I must confess I never saw a finer specimen of a man.

"While there, some important news, the nature of which I did not know, called Washington away, and as he left the room, apparently

in considerable excitement, he said: 'Colonel, I will return ere long, and we will resume our conversation; please pardon my abruptly leaving you.'

"I knew a sentinel stood at the door, but I walked over and glanced at the papers upon the table, for a few moments, and then seeing some blanks signed by Washington, I hastily wrote me a pass through the lines, stating I was bound on a secret and urgent mission to yourself, and sent by the rebel commander, with instructions also to the guard to pass me back into the lines again within three days.

"Glancing up as I finished, I saw the eye of the sentinel upon me, and in him I recognized a deserter from my own troop; and knowing well his cupidity, as well as his dislike to soldiering, I told him frankly, if he would go through the lines with me I would get him a pardon for his desertion, give him a thousand pounds, and pay his way by the first ship returning to England.

"He was only too glad to accept the offer, and having quickly decided to act, at once informed me that Washington had been called to a distant point from his head-quarters, and would not return for an hour or more.

"Anxious to risk at once my chance of escape I soon placed the necessary passes in my pocket, and arming myself with a brace of pistols and sword I saw lying upon a table near, I bade the sentinel at once march me back, as though he had orders to take me to my prison quarters.

"With wonderful presence of mind he obeyed, and without the slightest suspicion passed through the guards into a path leading upon the border of a small wood, and here he left me for a moment, and soon returned with a couple of fine horses, saddled and bridled for the road, for he had taken them from the staff officers' stables.

"I assure you, my lord, I was not long in mounting, and inwardly determined I would cut my way through a guard line ere I would return to imprisonment.

"But my passes I found sufficient, for the guards, seeing me coming from the direction of their encampments, and attended by a soldier belonging to Washington's own body-guard, were not very strict in glancing over the papers I carried.

"Rapidly we sped on until the last line was passed, and then, as I was congratulating myself upon my safety, we came suddenly upon a score of Tarleton's Hussars, and my heart sunk within me, for I deemed my recapture certain, yet, as you see, I was mistaken, and it was my soldier companion who saved me, for upon observing the troopers he called out to them, and riding up to the sergeant, held a few minutes' conversation with him in a low tone, in which he afterward informed me that he had boldly told him that a lieutenant and one other soldier besides himself had me in charge, until the officer's horse, falling with him, he had been so severely injured as to be forced to return with the other trooper, while he continued on with me, it being most urgent that I should go at once forward.

"The rascal also asked for another man to go with us, and the sergeant having slowly examined my papers, detailed one of his men to accom-

pany us, and away we rode, the deserter and myself inwardly happy at our escape.

"We met several other squads of Tarleton's Hussar Rangers, but the man with us was passport enough, and without further adventure we reached the river, where the Hussar soon found us a boat.

"At a preconcerted signal, the soldier and myself then seized the Ranger, and as he had served us a good turn, disliking to injure him or make him a prisoner, I at once told him I had escaped, gave him the horse to take back, with my compliments and thanks to General Washington, and springing into the boat we pushed off from the shore; and not a moment too soon, I assure you, my lord; for hardly had we left the bank two minutes when a body of horsemen dashed up and poured a volley upon us.

"But it was harmless, and in half an hour more we were upon our own shore, and here I am, my lord."

"And delighted am I to see you, colonel, for indeed you have made a wonderful escape—one smacking of the Hussar Captain's style.

"But I suppose I must pardon the soldier, for, deserter though he is, he has shown true pluck and considerable talent. Yes, I will pardon him, and with the cash you promised him, he can make tracks for England, and there lead an honest life."

What more was said, the Hermit did not wait to hear, as he deemed it expedient that he should at once decamp, and hastily quitting the room, he once more passed the sentinel, and was now out in the street, and walking in the direction of the Tarleton mansion.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CONSPIRACY.

THOUGH the Hermit believed he had departed unseen from the room in which he had been an unsuspected auditor of the conversation between Lord Howe and Colonel Templeton, he was mistaken, for in leaving the apartment, though he had closed the door quietly, the sound at once caught the quick ear of the English commander, who instantly rushed into the adjoining chamber, but discovered no one.

"Strange, Templeton; I certainly heard some one in here."

"Yes, my lord, and I did, also."

"Then am I not wrong, as you also heard it. Please step outside and ask the sentinel who has passed in."

The colonel obeyed, and the next moment returned with the information that it was the Hermit.

"Then he heard what was said, and is off. By Heaven! he must not escape," said Lord Howe, anxiously.

"No, my lord; and I will at once summon guards and have search made for him."

"Do so, colonel, and— Hulloa!"

The last exclamation of the chief was occasioned by seeing the door suddenly open and the Hermit appear; but recovering himself, he said, sternly:

"Well, sir, I have just given the order to have search made for you."

"I am glad I was in time to prevent trouble,

for I am frequently hard to find, my lord; but I came a few minutes since, and hearing voices, I concluded not to disturb you, so walked away until you should be at leisure. Why, Colonel Templeton, you here? I am glad to see you have been so quickly exchanged," and the Hermit advanced in an easy, careless manner toward the officer, who received his congratulations coldly, while he bent a peculiar look upon Lord Howe, who evidently understood it, for he rejoined:

"Yes, Hermit, the colonel exchanged himself—that is, he took French leave; but wait one moment, here, for I would speak with you."

Motioning to Colonel Templeton to follow, Lord Howe walked into the next room and said, quickly:

"Colonel, I'll test his faithfulness to-night, and in this way:

"I wish you to go at once to the barracks, and ask for an ensign there, one who has just come over from England and is to be attached to my staff; his name is Fontleroy, and he is the image of that arch traitor to his country, Putnam, of Connecticut.

"Tell Fontleroy to go with you to the prison, and having robed himself in the uniform of a Continental colonel, have him confined in a cell, and make him fully understand that he is to play the part of General Putnam, and enter into any plan that the Hermit may make for his escape."

"My lord, this is a glorious scheme, and one worthy of you. I will depart at once."

"Do so, and within the hour we will know whether this Hermit is true to us, or really the spy of Washington.

"I will detain him here for some time, and then send him off to the prison to endeavor to see what information he may gain from the supposed-to-be Putnam."

Colonel Templeton immediately departed upon his errand, while Lord Howe once more sought the Hermit, saying carelessly:

"I wanted you this time for a peculiar duty. You must know that we have lately taken prisoner the so-called General Israel Putnam."

"Indeed, my lord, I had not heard of his capture," said the Hermit, with surprise.

Lord Howe smiled and returned:

"Then there are some things which even you do not know, Hermit?"

"I confess it, my lord."

"Well, I wish you to go the prison, taking with you a strong guard, and seek an interview with Putnam in his cell. Make known to him that you are in Washington's service, and endeavor to make him believe you are *probing* me, and thereby gain from him all the information you can of the intended movements of the rebels.

"If you do not succeed, you can bring Putnam from the prison and conduct him here."

"I will do so, my lord; doubtless you can gather from him much important information."

"Doubtless," dryly said Lord Howe, and he then continued. "Now, Hermit, you know your instructions?"

"Fully, my lord, and I will depart at once."

"No haste, so that you return in an hour or so," and Lord Howe seated himself at the table

to write the pass for the Hermit, to get a guard, and permission to visit the rebel Putnam.

Armed with his passes and inwardly rejoicing over the lucky accident that placed it in his power, as he supposed, to release the famous officer from an English prison, the Hermit bade adieu to Lord Howe and quickly departed upon his errand to the barracks, where, having had four soldiers detailed to accompany him, he wended his way to the prison, anxious to hasten the undertaking, for he feared his waiting friends would be nervously expecting his coming to conduct them to the boat, as it was then the time appointed to meet them.

Arriving at the prison, the Hermit bade the guard await him outside, and exhibiting his pass to the keeper, was ushered through a long narrow passageway down several flights of stairs, until he came to a heavy oaken door, which the jailer at once opened.

Entering the large but uncomfortable cell, the Hermit beheld, by the light of the keeper's lamp, a man of heavy frame, but with a smooth, intelligent face, lying upon a low cot, and though he had never seen General Putnam, he at once believed the man before him to be that personage, as he had frequently heard the patriot's appearance described.

"Jailer, you can leave me with the prisoner," said the Hermit sternly, and his request being obeyed, he awaited until the heavy door was close, and then said, cautiously:

"General, I am sorry to see you a prisoner."

"The fortunes of war; but, to what cause am I indebted for the honor of your visit?" replied the disguised Englishman, abruptly.

"I have come by order of Lord Howe, in whose secret service I am; but, not to mince matters, let me at once ask, would you be free?"

"A strange question, indeed, to ask a prisoner."

"True; but if you would be free, it now rests in my power to aid your escape; how, I cannot now explain, as I have not time; but come, follow me, for I have orders to conduct you to the presence of Lord Howe, and *en route* we can together master the guard of four men and escape together, for this night must I also leave the British lines."

The smile of triumph that crossed the face of the man before him, the Hermit mistook for joy at an opportunity to escape, and stepping to the door, he called to the jailer to open it.

The heavy portal swung slowly back, and two persons entered, one of whom said, quietly:

"Fontleroy, is he a traitor, or not?"

"A doubly-dyed one, sir," answered the supposed General Putnam, and at his words, one of the two who had entered the cell, cast aside his cloak, and, drawing a sword, stepped forward, saying:

"Hermit, you are trapped! Resistance is useless, and you are my prisoner."

The Hermit drew himself up proudly, glanced into the face of Colonel Templeton, and, understanding the manner in which he had been caught, said quickly, while his hand stole beneath his cloak:

"And *why* am I your prisoner, colonel?"

"It matters not, sir; you are—"

Ere the officer could say more, the Hermit sprung upon him and hurled him to the floor with great violence, while, turning as quick as light, he drove his sword through the body of Fontleroy, who fell without a groan.

"Hold, sir! move one inch and you are a dead man!" he cried, seizing the jailer, who in fright, was endeavoring to unlock the door, which he had closed behind him when he entered with Colonel Templeton.

In dismay the jailer shrunk back, and seizing the keys, the Hermit soon opened the door, took up the lamp, and then, closing and locking the portal behind him, strode rapidly down the narrow passageway toward the entrance to the prison.

"Shall we accompany you, sir?" asked the corporal of the guard he had brought with him, as the Hermit was about to pass.

"No; await, and come with Colonel Templeton and the prisoner."

"Yes, sir."

Walking rapidly down the street the Hermit turned the first corner just as he heard the cry of his enemies behind him, for the jailer, having a duplicate key on his belt, had soon opened the cell door, and, accompanied by Colonel Templeton, whose fall had but slightly stunned him, the two had rapidly given chase, alarmed the four soldiers in waiting, and away all started in close pursuit of the daring fugitive.

CHAPTER XIX.

A REVELATION AND A RIDE.

RAPIDLY the Hermit sped on until, at length, he reached the mansion of Mrs. Vancourt, and ascending the steps, he hurriedly knocked at the door.

Salome answered his knock, ushered him into the room, where were her mother, Mrs. Vancourt and Lucille.

"Is all in readiness, Miss Tarleton?"

"Yes, all, for we have sent everything down to your boat by Caesar, who, with his wife, is to accompany us, and they are now awaiting us upon the river-bank; yet, sir, there is one other we expect;" and Salome paused and colored slightly.

"Miss Tarleton, ladies, I have this night learned of a circumstance that may make my protection as the Hermit far from safe, so I will remove the vail, and at once cast off this disguise."

"Behold me now in my true character, and if I have deceived you, forgive me, for what I have done has been for a deep purpose."

As the Hermit spoke, he drew from his head and face the immense mass of snow-white hair and beard, and the handsome, resolute and youthful face of Lord Lionel Livingstone stood revealed.

"Lord Livingstone! you and the Hermit of Hell-gate one and the same?" asked Salome, when she had at last recovered from her surprise, while Lucille and the two matrons were too much astonished to speak.

"Yes, Lord Livingstone and the Hermit are one, but why the mystery I cannot explain, as time presses."

"Here, let me cast aside this dress I wear, and then we will start," and retiring into an-

other room, Lord Lionel returned in a moment dressed in a suit of sailor blue, and wearing a large cloak, which being thrown back, displayed that he wore a sword and a brace of pistols.

"Not yet have you recovered from your surprise? Why, indeed, I seem to have struck you all dumb with amazement! But come, for it is dangerous to tarry now," and so saying Lord Lionel advanced to the door followed by the ladies.

But as the party descended the steps the sound of running feet were heard, and the next instant Colonel Templeton and a dozen soldiers appeared.

"Hold! Who goes there? Hold! or I fire!" cried the officer, nearly out of breath with his long run.

"What! Templeton, as I live! Why, old fellow, when did you escape from a rebel prison?" demanded Lord Lionel, with perfect *nonchalance*, as he advanced toward his friend, for between himself and the British officer there had existed quite an intimacy.

But now he was in no mood for conversation, and though politely raising his hat to the ladies, he answered:

"I escaped from prison, my lord, and some day will tell you how; but now I must hasten, for I pursue a spy."

"A spy! Indeed! and who, may I ask?"

"That arch traitor known as the Hermit of Hell-gate, curses rest on him!" angrily replied Colonel Templeton.

"Why, that is remarkable. I thought he was Lord Howe's right-hand man."

"Yes, he was *supposed* to be, but he was a traitor to Howe, and is really in the pay of Washington; but have you seen aught of him?"

"Yes, he passed along here only a few moments since, and cannot now be far away."

"Then we'll soon overtake him, and should you meet him, my lord, shoot him down as though he were a dog."

"Thank you, Colonel Templeton, I do not serve under your orders; but if you catch the Hermit be certain to let me know. Yet stay; will you not accompany us for a row upon the waters, where we can hear the music of the bands?"

"Not to-night, thank you; for I must catch that traitor. Good-night!" and away the officer went, followed by his troopers, while Lord Lionel and his frightened companions walked from the house, which was left in the care of faithful servants, as was the Tarleton mansion also, and took a gravel way leading down to the river, where they soon arrived, and found Caesar and Dinah awaiting them.

"Are all the things aboard, Caesar?" asked Lord Lionel.

"Yes, master, I put them forward under the deck," politely returned the black.

"Then, ladies, let me aid you into the boat," and in a short while the whole party had embarked, and completely filled the cockpit of the small craft, which never before had carried such a precious cargo.

Running down the Hudson until it joined its rival, the East river, Lord Lionel passed close under the stern of the American cruiser.

All was quiet on board, and only the form of

the officer could be seen quietly pacing the quarter-deck, little dreaming of the intended attack upon the vessel under his charge, and wholly unconscious of the danger to himself and crew that lay in the trim little sail-boat, flying by in easy pistol range.

Heading his craft in the direction of Elizabethport as soon as he had rounded the stern of the cruiser, Lord Lionel stood close in toward the Jersey shore, and kept a bright lookout for the returning boats; but the city disappeared astern, its hum of many voices, and sound of martial music was no longer heard, and yet no sign of the coming Rangers.

"They should have been in sight ere this. Strange we do not discover them, Caesar."

"Just so, sir."

"You must keep your eyes wide open, my man."

"Never fear, sir, I am watching the waters pretty keen," returned the negro, who was lying down upon the deck and anxiously longing for the welcome sight of the coming boats.

"If the expedition proved successful, we will soon know all, for the boats cannot now be far distant; but if any accident has prevented Captain Tarleton from coming, I will then head round Staten Island and make Amboy, where we can soon find a place of safety," said Lord Lionel, quietly, and he stood nearer in toward the Jersey shore, and again bent his keen gaze over the waters.

CHAPTER XX.

ENTRAPPED.

WITH the first shade of darkness the commander of the American prize vessel selected his men, twenty in number, and arming them fully, they rowed away in the direction of Elizabethport, the officer and all delighted at the prospect of distinguishing themselves by the capture of the famous Hussar Captain.

With muffled oars, and strong and steady pull the two boats sped on, mile after mile, Rebel acting as coxswain of the cutter containing the officer and twelve of the men.

"How much further have we to go, my man?" asked the English officer after a pull of two hours.

"Only 'bout two miles, Massa Lieutenant. You see the heavy hill yonder, de one dat broke off suddinly in de bay?" asked Rebel, pointing ahead to where a ridge of forest approached the coast.

"Yes."

"Well, de cabin of de smuggler am up dere, in dose woods."

"Your master said we were to go up to the cabin, I believe?"

"Yes, massa, I conduct you to de cabin, and de men wait till dey see you go in de door, and den dey come up and surround de house."

"Yes, that is the Hermit's plan, and he says there will not be more than two or three of the Rangers there with their captain, so I had better leave half of my men in the boats," interrogatively said the officer.

"Dat am all right, Massa Leftenant, but you see I would like to give you de opinion of dis black-man."

"Speak out, my fine fellow, for upon you

greatly depends the success of our expedition," frankly replied the Englishman.

"Den I told you; you go up wid me to de cabin, and den let de men come 'long behind."

"All of them?"

"Yes, sah, 'cause you don't know but what dere *might* be some of dem Ranger cusses dere."

"That is so; I will follow your advice—what, is this the landing?" and as the lieutenant spoke, Rebel ran the boat to shore.

"Yes, massa, here we am. Now here is de oder boat landed, and yonder, you see de light from de cabin," and Rebel sprung ashore, while the officer quickly followed.

"Look to your arms, men, and when you see yonder cabin-door open and me enter, then come on quietly and surround the house, and await my call."

"Yes, sir, answered the men, and then, guided by Rebel, the officer started toward the cabin on the hill.

A short walk brought them to the door, which Rebel knocked lightly upon, and there came an answer from within, in the well-known voice of Glen Tarleton:

"Well, who comes?"

"It am me, Massa Capt'in, and a friend," replied the negro.

"Ha, my worthy friend, enter," returned Glen, and, in obedience, the negro and the Englishman walked into the cabin, and found there only the Hussar Captain, who, bowing politely, said, in the quick, stern tones usual to him:

"Well, sir, I almost feared you were not coming—

"Lieutenant, you are my prisoner."

"Ha! treachery! What means this! Ho! my men—"

"Hold, sir! One word more and you, die! I repeat, you and also your men, are prisoners; so put up your pistol if you value your life; for a hundred good Hussar Rangers surround you."

The lieutenant glanced savagely around him, and still holding both his sword and pistol on the defensive, hesitated for a moment longer.

"Rebel, go out and bring me word if the boat's crew are yet taken. Now, sir, do you yield, or shall I use force?"

"No, sir, I'll not yield without a blow in self-defense," suddenly cried the Englishman, and firing his pistol in the face of the Hussar Captain, he sprung forward at the same time with drawn sword.

"Ha, *that's* your play! Well, have it so!" cried Glen, by whose head the bullet had passed in dangerous proximity, and his own bright blade flashed from its scabbard and crossed the officer's weapon.

But, only for a short while did the combat last, and then the Englishman was disarmed, and the American's sword was at his heart.

"Do you yield now, sir?"

"I do, for there is nothing else for me to do. You are the Hussar Captain?"

"I am."

"Then I do not wonder at my defeat."

"You came here to take me prisoner, and the tables are turned upon you; but, lieutenant, my officers will look to your welfare, and that of your men. Well, Rebel, what news?"

"Massa Saville and Massa Loyd have took all de Englishers, sir."

"There was no fighting, I believe?"

"No, sah; I told 'em de lieutenant was took, and de men surrender at once."

"All right; ah, here come my officers now," exclaimed Glen, and the next instant Morris Saville and Henry Loyd entered the cabin.

"I congratulate you upon your success, gentlemen; but here is the lieutenant, whom I will leave in your charge, for I must be off."

Bidding adieu to his officers, and saluting his prisoner politely, Glen walked rapidly from the cabin, and soon reached the boats, where he was greeted by his men with a cheer.

"Thanks, my men—shove off, and ply heavily to your oars," and springing into the long boat, and telling Rebel to follow him, the Hussar Captain gave the order to "give way," and the two boats were soon rapidly pulling back in the direction of New York, but with a far different commander and crew from the one they had brought.

In an hour's time they sighted the sail-boat. Soon they were in hailing-distance, and Glen called out:

"Sail-boat ahoy!"

"Ahoy!"

"What boat is that?"

"The Hermit," was the answer, in the deep tones of Lord Lionel.

"Ay, ay! Shorten sail and drop astern, for, as we have now a fair breeze up the harbor, I will raise our canvas," replied Glen.

"Ay, ay! I'll follow in your wake," was the answer, and the masts having been stepped in the cutters, and the sails unfurled, the three boats glided silently along together, that of Lord Lionel astern.

Just as midnight tolled from the bells of the sleeping town, the boats glided under the stern of the American cruiser.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PILOT OF HELL-GATE.

"BOATS ahoy!" hailed the watchful lieutenant, and Glen answered in a low tone:

"Ahoy the prize cruiser!"

"What boats are those?"

"Ay, ay, Morgan; *we* are successful," returned Glen, with a peculiar emphasis upon the pronoun, as he steered his boat alongside the vessel.

Wholly off his guard by the answer, and believing the boats to contain the crews they went away with, Lieutenant Morgan hastened to the gangway to receive his commander and offer his congratulations, when he was suddenly seized in the strong arms of Glen Tarleton, and borne forcibly to the deck, while a score of gallant Rangers, metamorphosed into seamen, sprung upon and bound the half-dozen English sailors who manned the vessel.

In twenty minutes more, silently and quickly, the prize crew of the cruiser were in irons below, and sixty brave tars, released from their chains, once more trod the deck of their beautiful vessel, supported by thirty Rangers.

The two cutters were soon hanging from the davits, and the sail-boat of Lord Lionel was

drawn upon deck, while, with quick dispatch the sails were let fall and the anchor weighed.

A moment more, and with all her canvas spread to catch the stiff breeze, the sloop-of-war headed down the harbor, but only for a short while did she stand on that course, for suddenly an English fleet was descried standing boldly up toward the city!

At first Glen thought of running to his former position and waiting until the fleet had anchored, but then he feared some of the vessels might lie near him, and then it would be impossible to get away.

"No, I see no means of escape for the vessel, though we can run up the Hudson, beach her, and save ourselves," he said, moodily, for he disliked to see his hopes of success suddenly dashed from him.

"Run through Hell-gate, massa, and go out into the Sound," said the quiet voice of Rebel at his elbow.

"Ha! a happy thought; I forgot you were with us. Here, take the helm."

"I dunno de channel, massa; only knows as far as up to de cavern. I sink de ship certain if I go take de hellum."

"My heavens, this is too bad, to see ruin stare us in the face, when hope of triumph is so near. Here, lads, pass the word and know if there is a Hell-gate pilot on board."

The word was passed, but no answer in the affirmative was heard, and Glen was about to give the order to wear ship and stand up the Hudson, when Rebel again approached and said:

"It am all right, Massa Captain; my massa come right off."

"Your master! the Hermit! Why, Rebel, I did not see him come on board and believed he had been detained; but, truly, I have been so engaged since we boarded, I have not yet been in the cabin to speak to my mother and sister."

"Here he am, Massa Glen."

Glen turned and beheld, not the Hermit of Hell-gate, but Lord Lionel Livingstone, who, upon reaching the vessel's side, had immediately aided the ladies aboard and ushered them into the cabin, where he had remained until Rebel went down and told him that the English fleet was coming up the harbor and the only chance of escape was through Hell-gate.

"Captain Tarieton, I see you do not recognize me; I am Lord Lionel Livingstone."

"I am happy to meet you, my lord, but am sorry at this time not to be able to say more, as my vessel demands my whole care."

"True; you have to run through Hell-gate, or otherwise lose the vessel you have gained?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Give me the helm, please."

"You! Lord Livingstone! Surely you can know nothing of Hell-gate channel?"

"No man knows it better, Captain Tarleton. I am the Hermit of Hell-gate!"

"You! You! Yet, now I recognize your voice and form. Here, take the helm, and another time solve for me this riddle," said Glen relinquishing the wheel to him.

"Here, Rebel, aid me. Ready all to wear ship! Ready about!" cried Lord Lionel, in the energetic and ringing tones of the thorough

seaman, and, prompt to obey, every man sprung to his post, the obedient vessel answered her helm gracefully, and the next moment was dashing boldly past the sleeping city up the waters of the East river, and heading for Hell-gate.

On swept the beautiful vessel, bending bravely to the breeze, and soon could be heard ahead the mad roar of the waters, but calm and cool the helmsman stood at his post, with every eye bent upon him, for all on board well knew the dangerous gantlet they had to run.

Salome and Lucille had come to the deck, and were quietly standing far aft watching the every action of the pilot, and listening with dismay to the roar of the waters.

"Oh, Glen, will we not be dashed to pieces?" cried Lucille, as she laid her hand on the arm of the Hussar Captain, and drew near to him.

"Lucille, I have perfect confidence in that remarkable man. If any living being can save this vessel, he can; but hush, let no word disturb him."

Silent as the grave all stood, and with straining eyes watched ahead for the chaos of waters, whose roar soon became deafening; yet not one muscle of the bold, handsome face of Lord Lionel quivered, and the hand upon the wheel was as firm as iron.

"Steady, Rebel!" and the voice was deep and stern.

"Steady 'tis, massa!" answered the negro.

"Now, stand ready all to let go! Hard down with the helm! Rebel! *hard!*"

"Ay, ay, massa! Hard down it is!"

"Hard, hard up the helm!"

"Ay, ay, massa! Hard up it is!"

"Steady—port a little—*steady* as you are!"

While the above orders were given in a quick, terse tone, the vessel, though minding her helm, reeled and staggered as though the vortex would engulf her; but soon shaking off the wild waters, she forged on once more, and in half an hour was gliding majestically along toward the wind-tossed waters of the Sound, having passed through the dread ordeal by the skill and courage of Lord Lionel Livingstone, known as the Hermit of Hell-gate.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HISTORY OF A MYSTERY.

IN the year 1736, there dwelt in "Merry England" Lord Lionel Livingstone and his two sons, twin brothers—at that time twenty years of age.

Devoted to both of his sons alike, Lord Livingstone was anxious to divide the vast wealth he possessed equally between them, and to settle the dispute as to which one should inherit the title, he playfully proposed that the brothers should draw lots therefor, which they consented to do, both confessing their willingness to accept in good faith the result.

The test was given, and the title was won by Lionel Livingstone, and though his brother Launcelot laughed away his defeat, it was plain to all he deeply felt it, and each day of their lives made it more evident that a growing hatred for Lionel was springing up in his heart.

Lionel was of a confiding, noble nature, and beloved by all, while Launcelot was irritable,

selfish, and very few liked him, although over his father he possessed wonderful influence, an influence that was soon turned bitterly against his brother, who, having entered into a secret marriage with a young girl, beneath him in rank, confessed it to Launcelot in confidence, not knowing that it would be at once told to his father.

So infuriated was the old nobleman at this clandestine act of his son, that he at once banished him from his home, and in sorrow Lionel left England, and, accompanied by his young and beautiful wife, sailed for America.

Shortly after his arrival in the colonies, his wife gave birth to a son, whom he named after himself; but the fond mother never lived to hear her boy lisp her name, as she died ere he reached his second year.

Broken-hearted almost at the death of his wife, whom he loved with an almost idolatrous worship, the poor widower determined to retire from the world and seek some secluded retreat where he could live only for his little son.

Securing passage in a small coasting-sloop running to Boston, the Englishman determined to seek a home near that city, but in passing through Hell-gate, the little vessel was dashed upon a rock and cut to pieces, while all that were on board excepting three lives were lost.

Those three were Lionel Livingstone, his child, and a negro boy of twelve years of age, and they were saved by clinging to a part of the wreck that was driven shoreward, and thence into a small basin completely rock-bound.

What was the surprise of Mr. Livingstone to find here a spacious cave, that would be a secure retreat for him, and he determined to at once turn it to advantage; so he left the little Lionel in charge of the negro boy, and swam out to where the upturned yawl of the sloop had lodged on a rock.

This he soon reached, and with delight found oars tied within the boat. In a few moments he had rowed back into the basin, and taking the negro and his child with him, pulled cautiously through the surging waters, and headed for the, then, town of New York.

A few days more, and with a boat laden with every comfort in his secluded retreat, Mr. Livingstone returned to the cavern off Hell-gate, accompanied by the negro boy and his little son, and from that day the cave became their home, and though he was known to many as the Hermit of Hell-gate, no person knew the way to his secluded retreat or how he lived.

In that cavern had passed the boyhood of the Lionel of my story, with the negro boy his only playmate, and ere he had reached his fifteenth year, he became a most expert sailor, and under the tuition of his father, a thorough scholar.

At length Mr. Livingstone sickened and died;

but ere he breathed his last, he told his son the story of his life, and bade him go to England and claim his title and estates, for he knew that Lionel was then the heir, as his brother Launcelot, so he had seen in a London journal, had been killed in a duel, and never having married, left no heir, while the old Lord Lionel, shortly after, followed his son to the grave.

Lionel buried his father in the grassy inclosure just off the land entrance to the cavern, and, armed with the papers his father had left him, to prove his identity, he sought England, carrying his only friend and companion, the faithful negro, with him.

Without trouble he proved himself the heir, and was at once the lord and master of the vast Livingstone estates.

Through his travels and his career as an officer in the British army in India, I will not follow him, but hasten on to the breaking out of war between the States and mother country, when, a true American by birth and at heart, he determined to enter the service of his country.

Finding, however, upon his arrival in New York, that it was in his power to play a double part, he at once sought General Washington, made known to him the strange history of his life, and offered his services, and willingly did the American chieftain accept them.

Strangely like his father in appearance, Lionel soon made himself more so by assuming the false gray hair and beard, and suddenly appearing before the people, at once revived the story of the Hermit of Hell-gate, the name his father had won by his secluded life and venerable appearance.

The success and good services of Lionel as the Hermit, and his career as Lord Livingstone, are already known to the reader, so I need only say that I will try his patience but a short time longer in concluding my story.

After running out of the Sound, the American cruiser headed southward, and after a rapid run dropped anchor in James river, where the Hussar Captain and his friends landed and went to the large estate of his mother, situated upon the banks of that memorable stream.

There, in that old Virginia home, were married shortly after, Glen Tarleton and Lucille Vancourt, Lionel Livingstone and Salome Tarleton.

After a short honeymoon, the noble husbands left their brides and once more took to battling for their native land, the Hussar Captain to win promotion and a gallant name at the head of his Rangers, and Lionel Livingstone to sweep the seas, as the commander of the swift-sailing sloop-of-war he had aided in retaking from the British.

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